

New Whittington Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112668
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	310973
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	304
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Karen Johnson
Headteacher	Mr Wayne Parkinson
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	London Street New Whittington Chesterfield Derbyshire S43 2AQ
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This primary school is larger than average. While the majority of pupils are of White British origin, a small proportion represents a diverse range of minority ethnic backgrounds. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. These pupils' needs cover a wide range but are mainly in speech and language, behaviour and moderate learning difficulties. The school has a unit for hearing impaired pupils and consequently, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

The school has, in its Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), a Nursery class with 52 part time children in addition to the Reception class. Children start in the Nursery class with knowledge and skills that are at the levels expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory as most pupils attend regularly and behave well though a few lose concentration at times when the pace of lessons slows. Pupils are happy at school, form good relationships and trust all the adults who work with them. They are kind to others and are keen to take on responsibilities. They understand the importance of staying safe, fit and healthy and participate enthusiastically in the many clubs and activities the school organises. Parents are generally positive about the school and say that staff are very approachable.

Satisfactory teaching and curriculum provision in the Nursery and Reception classes result in children attaining all the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Overall standards in Years 2 and 6 are average and achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Progress is generally steady through each class but in the Key Stage 2 classes, there is insufficient challenge, particularly in writing, to ensure higher standards. Pupils who need extra help with their learning, including those with hearing impairment, achieve satisfactorily because they receive appropriate support. Where teaching is good, it challenges pupils well and learning is good, but too many lessons are not as demanding, and in many lessons pupils of all abilities do the same tasks. The curriculum is satisfactory. While enrichment activities are good, pupils have too few opportunities to work independently and practise their writing skills at length. Care arrangements and support are satisfactory with appropriate procedures in place to safeguard pupils' welfare and meet their pastoral needs. However, academic guidance is inconsistent. While pupils' progress is monitored closely and they have individual targets, teachers do not always use the information on pupils' standards and progress well enough to challenge them fully, particularly in writing. In most classes, pupils do not have sufficient guidance as to what they need to do to improve their work. As a result, some pupils, particularly the more able, are not achieving as well as they could.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has identified the main priorities for improvement because the school's self-assessment is largely accurate. Helpful advice from the local authority is supporting improvements in the teaching of writing, especially at Key Stage 2. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour and subject leaders do not check thoroughly enough that pupils in every class have the work they need to help them achieve more. While links with parents are good, links with other communities are less well developed and thus the school's overall contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. Improved standards at Key Stage 1 this year and higher attendance, reflect that leaders have satisfactory capacity to improve the school further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision for the children within the EYFS is satisfactory. Robust procedures ensure children's safety and well-being are secure. They form good relationships and as a result, are happy in their work and play. Most co-operate well with others and respond enthusiastically to teaching, although a few do become distracted and restless when asked to concentrate for too long. Liaison with parents is good. Parents are encouraged to help their children learn at home and say that all staff are very approachable.

In the temporary absence of a Foundation Stage leader, teachers in the EYFS classes ensure that the teaching and curriculum meet children's needs appropriately. Aspects that are less secure, for example children's writing skills, are given greater emphasis. The work on learning letters and sounds is particularly effective in developing children's word-building skills for reading. Teaching is satisfactory but opportunities are missed to challenge the more able to extend their skills. Children who need extra help with their learning, including those who have hearing impairment, are identified early and supported well. A good balance of adult-guided activities and those that children select helps them gain confidence and independence. The outside area is a popular attraction but is limited in its size and facilities, for example for climbing and exploration, to support higher achievement. Interaction between children in the EYFS is limited because the classes are not close together, and not enough is done to support a smooth transition from being part time in the Nursery to full time in the Reception class.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities and greater challenge for pupils to write independently and at length, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure teachers use assessment information to challenge pupils appropriately and that pupils have the targets and guidance they need to improve their work.
- Monitor teaching more rigorously to ensure pupils, particularly the more able, are challenged appropriately in every class.
- Provide further opportunities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes to interact more to enable smooth transition to Reception

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 make satisfactory gains in the EYFS and this level of achievement is maintained in Years 1 to 6. In the teacher assessments of 2008, pupils in Year 2 attained average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in the current Year 6 are working at broadly average levels. Standards are slightly higher in mathematics because pupils' problem solving and mental mathematics skills are developed well. While standards are broadly average in English and science, there is insufficient challenge to help more able pupils achieve more and hence raise standards further. Raising standards in writing is currently a school priority because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through other subjects. Through satisfactory support, pupils who find learning difficult, including those with hearing impairment, achieve satisfactorily.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are polite and friendly and help others willingly. They generally behave well, listen attentively and enjoy learning. Most work hard in lessons although a few do lose concentration when lessons lack interest and challenge. Most attend regularly because they say they like school. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the need to stay safe and healthy, and the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Despite occasional boisterous behaviour, most feel safe in the playground and

go confidently to teachers if problems arise. Many attend various sports clubs but not all select healthy meal options. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community. For example, school councillors decide on fund-raising events and recycling projects. As the school is located on two sites, older pupils have limited opportunities to support younger pupils. Many visits and visitors extend pupils' awareness of the world of work and leisure. Pupils' understanding of the cultures and traditions represented in Britain today is less well developed. The progress pupils make in their basic skills prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are well organised and support staff used appropriately to help individual pupils and small groups. Teaching generally involves pupils well in lively question and answer sessions and pupils respond enthusiastically. Teaching makes good use of computer facilities to present information so that pupils learn more effectively, but occasionally, when presentations are too long pupils lose interest and concentration. While some lessons include work planned for pupils of different abilities in a significant number all pupils experience the same presentation and complete the same tasks. As a result, while lower attaining pupils receive the help they need to achieve satisfactorily, the more able pupils are not challenged enough. Progress is also not as good, when teaching directs learning too much rather than allowing pupils, particularly the more able, to work independently and discover for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has a broad curriculum and pupils enjoy the interesting range of activities they undertake, for example in history, geography and French. Pupils who need extra help with their learning have appropriate additional activities to ensure they make satisfactory progress. Through effective individual support, pupils with hearing impairment gain the skills they need to participate satisfactorily in all that the school offers. Although information and communication technology is used well in many subjects, not enough emphasis is given to developing writing skills in subjects other than English. Satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development by boosting their confidence and self-esteem and providing a valuable insight into the world beyond school. A good range of clubs, visits and visitors enhance learning well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

While there are strengths in pastoral care and support, the inconsistent use of assessment information to provide academic guidance is a barrier to learning in some classes. Risk assessments, child protection and other procedures, including those for vetting staff and regular visitors to the school, for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being meet requirements. The learning mentor provides sensitive additional help to pupils who need specific emotional or learning support and external agencies are consulted where appropriate.

The school has a satisfactory system for assessing and recording the progress of each individual pupil regularly, but this information is not analysed effectively or used to set pupils high levels of challenge. Consequently, potential underachievement sometimes goes unrecognised and

unaddressed. In some classes, the targets teachers set pupils are not sufficiently demanding or explained well so pupils are unclear about what they need to do to reach the next level. While there are examples of good marking in the school, much is not helpful in guiding pupils as to how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Recent improvements in the teaching of letters and sounds in the EYFS and Key Stage 1 have resulted in improved standards in reading and writing. The appointment of a learning mentor has seen a marked improvement in attendance this term. However, monitoring activities are not all rigorous enough to ensure, for example, that all teachers follow agreed guidelines on marking. As a result, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching and academic guidance to pupils. Subject leaders take a limited role in monitoring but there is a useful plan to extend this. Governors have a sound overview of the school's performance and support the school well. Their role in challenging the school, to improve the quality of provision and hence raise standards, is underdeveloped. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion through developing pupils' skills in forming harmonious relationships. The headteacher is aware that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the traditions and cultures of Britain's diverse ethnic groups requires improvement.

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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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

28 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Whittington Primary School, Chesterfield, S43 2AQ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed our visit very much and this letter is to tell you some important things we found out while we were with you.

- You make a secure start in the Nursery and Reception classes because everyone looks after you and you have interesting things to do and play with.
- Your behaviour is mostly good and you enjoy being at school although a few of you lose concentration at times in some lessons.
- Your attendance has gone up this year and we hope this continues.
- You get on well with each other and help around the school.
- You understand how to stay safe, fit and healthy. Many of you attend the various sports clubs at the school, but do not always choose healthy meals.
- You work hard and make satisfactory progress but the more able could do even better and writing at Key Stage 2 is not as good as other subjects.
- All the adults in the school look after you, as they should.
- Teachers listen to what you say and all the other helpers support you with your work.
- All the things that your teachers plan for you to do, including lessons, clubs, visits and other events you take part in, are satisfactory. You learn many interesting things for example in history and geography.
- Your headteacher and other people who help to run your school do a sound job in helping you prepare for the future.

Every school has things that could be better. We have asked your school to give those of you in the junior classes, more opportunities to write and work independently so that you achieve higher standards. We want teachers to set you targets that are more challenging and to explain to you how to improve your work so you achieve these targets. We want the leaders in your school to check that all these improvements happen in every class. We also want children in the Nursery and Reception classes to spend more time doing activities together.

With very best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison

Lead inspector