

# Newton St Cyres Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113104
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	311108
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graeme Bassett

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	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Trudy Porter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Perry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Newton St Cyres Exeter EX5 5DD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 851267
<b>Fax number</b>	01392 851 267

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: current achievement and standards in the school, especially the standards in Year 2 and Year 6; the quality of teaching, particularly teachers' planning for mixed-age classes; and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from lessons, pupils' books, the progress tracking records, and discussions with the headteacher, staff and chair of governors. In addition, a group of children discussed their views of the school and parents' questionnaires were examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average-sized primary school draws most of the pupils from its immediate neighbourhood but there are a considerable number who come from Exeter and Crediton. There are four mixed-age classes for pupils in the Reception to Year 6. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Children enter the Foundation Stage with the skills and knowledge broadly as expected for their age and this has been the pattern for several years. The school has gained a Healthy Schools award and an Investors in People award.

## 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 an excellent school where the headteacher is the motivating force behind all improvements. She successfully fosters a strong commitment from all staff, pupils, governors and parents to do everything as well as it is possible and to continually strive to make the school even better. She sets a very clear and imaginative direction for the future of the school, bringing about leadership and management that are determined, measured and extremely effective. As a result, there is a very purposeful atmosphere and an industrious team spirit that pervades the school, ensuring that all pupils do as well as they can in everything they try. The outstanding leadership and management have a very strong impact upon the school and, as a result, most aspects of its work are exceptional. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and decisive actions have been taken to improve pupils' writing strategies further by strengthening the teaching of phonics. The recent addition of the 'Starlight studio' has a very strong impact upon the development of the arts curriculum. Such effective actions by the school's leadership demonstrate that the school has excellent capacity to improve further. Parents express very positive comments and this is summarised by one parent who reported that her 'daughter's happiness, self-esteem and confidence has grown in leaps and bounds.'

Overall standards fluctuate slightly from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each year group, but, nevertheless, the trend over the past five years shows that the school performs very well when compared with the national picture. In all instances, pupils are prepared skilfully for their next school and the development of their economic well-being is excellent. The successful maintenance of standards over a number of years is a result of the challenging targets set for each pupil. This continuing success is again a feature in current Year 6 as standards are well above the national average and pupils' achievement is excellent. The proportion of these pupils exceeding the expected standards is well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are also well above the expected levels. The additional support given to those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that these pupils achieve exceptionally well. The youngest children get off to a good start in all areas of learning because of the outstanding leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils' progress continues to be good and currently standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent because of the outstanding care, guidance and support evident throughout the school. Every pupil is included in all that the school does. This very positive inclusion fosters pupils' excellent attitudes to work and promotes their great enjoyment of learning. Many pupils show notable enthusiasm for the arts and the drama performances during the year. Pupils' attendance is good and behaviour is outstanding.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, regularly taking exercise and understanding the benefits of eating healthy food. They are very aware of how to stay safe and how to avoid taking unnecessary risks. All statutory requirements and procedures to ensure pupils' safety are in place. The pupils' involvement in the school community is outstanding and there is a strong sense that they all enjoy their work and support each other as a happy family. The school council willingly accepts responsibilities and conscientiously carries out various jobs around the school. Pupils are very polite and welcome other children into their own school courteously. This arrangement enables pupils to take a rewarding role in activities with larger groups of pupils.

The effective direction by the leadership and management has already established a good curriculum and preparations are well underway to incorporate the updated curriculum in September. Many pupils enjoy their musical tuition, gardening, fund-raising and various visits, including residential visits. These add effectively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is excellent overall. However, the school is aware that it still needs to do more through the curriculum to raise the pupils' awareness of the customs and traditions of other people living in our multicultural society.

Teaching is outstanding overall with imaginative tasks adapted well to meet the needs of the different ability groups within each of the mixed-age classes. Good links made between subjects such as English, history and ICT make learning more meaningful. The day-to-day maintenance of assessment records provide clear indications that show how competently each pupil is coping with new ideas, understanding and skills. Pupils are given extremely good guidance through their teachers' marking and they respond very well to these written comments. Pupils have frequent discussions with their teachers about the objectives they are set and take an active part in assessing when they have reached a target. Consequently, pupils sustain their concentration very well and have an excellent understanding of what they need to do next to improve. The school's progress tracking records plot each pupil's achievements very thoroughly and each one's progress is monitored extremely rigorously. Pupils who are not doing as well as expected receive additional support through booster groups and individual help. The teaching assistants take an active role in classrooms and give excellent support to the teachers and especially to the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The leadership and management use exceptionally reliable routines to monitor and evaluate the school's development, leading to quick actions being taken to alter course when necessary. The governing body is extremely knowledgeable and keeps a very prudent check on the targets set in the school's improvement plan and on the management of the budget. The delegation of responsibilities to subject leaders is successful and their analysis of pupils' learning forms an accurate picture of the effectiveness of teaching and learning throughout the school.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are excellent. As a result of the outstanding care, support and guidance given by the teacher and the teaching assistants, all children settle into school routines quickly. Teaching and learning are outstanding and the learning environment is exciting and bold. All children make good progress and gain confidence. They willingly cooperate with each other in activities and their behaviour is very good. The curriculum is vibrant and exciting and offers children a wide range of stimulating play-based and directed experiences. For example, children were stimulated very well when they explored initial phonics sounds through an investigation using alphabet spaghetti. By the time children enter Year 1, nearly all reach the goals expected for their age and many exceed these in all areas of learning.

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

- Plan the curriculum to include more opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of the customs and traditions of other people living in our multicultural society.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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



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

1 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Newton St Cyres Primary School, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, Devon, EX5 5DD Thank you for helping me when I recently visited your school. I enjoyed meeting you and chatting to you about your school. I found that your school provides you with an excellent education and that you do some exciting things. There is an extremely good team spirit in your school and it is a very happy place.

These are the things that are particularly strong in your school:

- The leadership and management of your school are outstanding.
- Your headteacher manages the school excellently and gives a strong direction so that it maintains its successes.
- The teaching is outstanding and your teachers plan very interesting tasks.
- Staff look after you and care for you exceptionally well. They give you extremely good advice when marking your books and discussing what you need to learn next.
- You make excellent progress by the time you leave the school.
- You are developing excellent attitudes towards your work and each other.
- Children in Reception get off to a very good start.
- You are very polite and your behaviour is exceptionally good.
- You know a lot about keeping safe and you understand how to remain healthy. There are still some ways in which your school could be better. We have asked your headteacher and governors to:
  - Plan the curriculum to include more opportunities for you to raise your awareness of the customs and traditions of other people living in our multi-cultural society.

You can help by asking your teachers how you can make your work even better.

Once again, thank you for your cooperation. Yours sincerely

Graeme Bassett Lead inspector