

The New Leake Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120466
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313627
Inspection date	16 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Joanne Harvey

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	25
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	Mr Steven Davison
Headteacher	Miss Jane Whant
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Fodderdyke Bank New Leake Boston Lincolnshire PE22 8JB
Telephone number	01205 270285
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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

This is a much smaller than average size school. Its pupils are accommodated in two classrooms. The small number of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) share a classroom with pupils in Years 1 and 2. A second classroom accommodates children from Years 3 to 6. The school serves the rural communities of New Leake, Eastville, Midville and further afield. The percentage of boys on roll considerably exceeds that of girls. No pupils currently claim free school meals. Lunches are provided by the school one day a week. The percentage of pupils from White British backgrounds is very high and there are no pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is higher than that found in most schools. A much higher number than expected start and leave the school at times of the year other than the usual admission times.

The school has Healthy School Status and is an Investor in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with school leaders that this is a satisfactory school, providing satisfactory value for money. There are clear signs that it is improving. This is the result of the determination and hard work of the headteacher, supported by governors and other staff, ensuring a satisfactory capacity to continue improvement. Although some elements of the school's work are good, leaders recognise that there are still areas where more development is needed. Provision in the EYFS is satisfactory.

The school provides good care and guidance for pupils and meets their pastoral needs particularly well. Pupils' personal development is good. Behaviour is good and attendance is satisfactory. Pupils make safe and healthy choices of lifestyle. They contribute well to the life of the school by taking on roles that benefit others. They are guided well academically, which is contributing to improvement. Systems are in place to check how well pupils are doing and to set them targets, which pupils say help them to make better progress. Children often enter the EYFS with low standards and, although they make satisfactory progress through the school, standards remain exceptionally low at Year 6. This broad picture masks more complex issues. For example, many children who arrive at the school part way through Key Stage 2 are not at the school long enough for good progress to result in higher standards. Some children who remain longer do make good progress and reach average standards. In addition, although overall achievement is satisfactory, it is better in English than in mathematics and science, where fewer pupils achieve levels higher than those normally expected for their age. Changes in the way that numeracy is taught and improvements in science, including a partnership with a specialist environmental centre, are underway. However, these are recent and not yet fully effective. No significant differences are apparent in the achievement of different groups of pupils and those who need extra help achieve as well as others.

Evidence from conversations with pupils and from their work confirms improvements made in the curriculum, which is now good. It promotes good personal development and offers much enrichment. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching has some consistently good aspects but too often the pace of learning slows. Teachers too often talk for too long and opportunities are missed for pupils to practise what they have learned in practical ways or through challenging investigations.

The impact of leadership and management is satisfactory. A strength is the headteacher's enthusiasm and determination for each individual to reach his or her potential, both academically and personally. Self-evaluation is increasingly accurate and results in the setting of challenging targets. Procedures recently introduced to monitor and evaluate the work of the school are helping to ensure that this is the case. These systems have yet to be fully developed to ensure sufficient rigour and focus on how improvements and new initiatives will be measured to gauge success. Staff and governors have worked together successfully, building valuable partnerships in the community along the way. This is helping to win greater support and confidence of parents. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are highly supportive of the school's work.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children settle quickly into the Reception, Year 1 and 2 class. Staff take great care in getting to know individuals and to help them feel confident and valued. Promotion of children's welfare is good, children are happy and feel safe and secure. Adults teach specific skills and model high expectations of behaviour. They encourage children to cooperate, show them how to listen and how to respond appropriately. Personal development is good. Children's learning is promoted satisfactorily. Activities are conscientiously planned, based on careful assessments to guide children's academic development and to ensure enjoyment. These activities include stimulating adult-led and child-initiated opportunities, although children sometimes spend too long sitting at tables working on formal activities. Leaders acknowledge that the balance between these two types of activity is not always optimal. There is sometimes insufficient time for children to explore their own ideas in different ways. The outdoor space has been considerably improved. It is not yet being used to its full potential to provide daily, outdoor opportunities for children's development across all areas of their learning. Satisfactory leadership is successfully developing teamwork in the setting and is gradually securing improvements to the quality of teaching and learning and smoothing out any inconsistencies that remain. Leaders are developing assessment systems to enable them to track children's progress more effectively. However, these are not yet sufficiently integrated into the school's overall systems.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the changes that are underway in the provision of numeracy and science are fully implemented, thereby raising performance, particularly of the more able, in these subjects.
- Quicken the pace of lessons and ensure that pupils get enough opportunities to investigate and learn in practical ways.
- Ensure that improvement planning is sharply focused and includes detail about how success will be measured.

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 enter the EYFS with low standards and although they make satisfactory progress through the school, standards remain exceptionally low at Year 6. However, within this picture of broadly satisfactory achievement some children make good progress and reach average standards. Many children arrive at the school part way through Key Stage 2 and they are not at the school long enough for good progress to result in higher standards. For example, of those who took the national tests in Year 6 in 2008, only one child was on roll in Year 2. Achievement is better in English than in mathematics and science, where fewer pupils achieve higher than expected levels for their age. The school has taken the innovative approach to forge a partnership with the head of an environmental centre to devise and run a programme to raise scientific achievement. The school is also working hard to ensure that recent changes to the numeracy strategy are fully implemented in order to raise standards in mathematics. The school is using increasingly challenging targets and thorough systems for checking pupils'

progress in order to drive standards up. Pupils who find learning harder than most receive the support that they need and make progress at a rate similar to that of other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their social, moral and spiritual development is good. They get on well together, demonstrating respect and consideration for others. Cultural development is satisfactory, although pupils have limited first hand opportunities to develop appreciation of the diverse nature of modern Britain. Pupils behave well and work hard. They enjoy their education and particularly value the many clubs they attend. Attendance is slightly below average, though staff do all they can to ensure parents and pupils understand the importance of coming to school every day. Pupils know how to make safe and healthy choices, helped considerably by their enthusiasm for physical activity and their excitement about growing and eating their own produce. Many make a good contribution to the school community, through their roles on the school council, for example, or as Junior Road Safety Officers. Within school and through working with community partner organisations they learn how to work together to the benefit of everyone. Their good personal skills and satisfactory progress in basic skills prepare them adequately for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers promote positive relationships and good attitudes. Pupils want to learn and work hard. They place a good focus on collaborative working, which successfully promotes pupils' personal development. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well so that lessons run smoothly. They get to know pupils well and plan work conscientiously to help pupils achieve their next target and to ensure their enjoyment. Pupils are clear about what they have to learn. Occasionally, however, work does not challenge the most able to do as well as they could. Some good and lively teaching is evident with questioning used well to extend pupils' thinking. This good practice is not consistently applied. On occasions when the pace of learning is slow, it is because teachers direct and instruct pupils for too long. This is at the cost of allowing them enough time to investigate answers to questions for themselves, restricting opportunities to develop and extend problem-solving skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is being revised and developed and is beginning to meet the needs of the pupils well. Planning for the development of pupils' basic skills is invariably thorough. A well thought out programme of personal, social and health education results in strong personal development. Themed topics enliven learning and an extensive range of enrichment activities provides lasting memories for pupils. A considerable number of visitors and trips to places of interest add to pupils' experience. Strong partnerships with other local schools and agencies are vigorously pursued and bring many additional activities, resources and volunteers who support teaching effectively. The planning of the curriculum as a whole now builds more effectively on pupils' general level of learning. Its impact on improving their academic skills is not yet fully evident.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school's inclusive and supportive family atmosphere successfully. Pupils and parents readily acknowledge her influence on the quality of pastoral support they receive, which is very good. One parent volunteered that 'The teachers and staff are always willing and helpful with any queries or problems and always have suitable solutions.' All the required checks are carried out to ensure pupils are safeguarded. Pupils say they find target setting and marking helpful in clarifying what they need to do to improve their work. Effective systems are in place for checking pupils' progress in National Curriculum mathematics, science and English. Procedures are becoming increasingly accurate in identifying potential underachievement, so that suitable additional support can be provided quickly. However, the system does not provide enough detail about the comparative progress of different groups and individuals such as, for example, those who have been in the school for only a short time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is developing a clear strategic direction for school improvement, guided by her enthusiasm for nurturing well-rounded individuals. Staff, governors and the majority of parents are united behind her vision. Several stated that they have been inspired by what she has done for the school's learning environment. Systems for checking how well pupils are progressing have ensured that they are on track to achieve challenging targets in increasing numbers. Self-evaluation is generally accurate but does not yet lead consistently to measurable improvement planning. Governors are supportive, and growing in their confidence to ask questions and to provide challenge about future school improvement. Leaders foster highly effective partnerships, for example, with local schools and other specialists for the benefit of all in school. This ensures that the needs of different groups are being tackled increasingly well to provide good equality of opportunity. The strong links within the local community also help promote cohesion to benefit pupils and their families. Wider global aspects are less well developed and the school has not yet evaluated its work to promote community cohesion.

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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 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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
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	4
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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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 learners' needs?	3
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?	2

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	2
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**

19 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The New Leake Primary School, New Leake, PE22 8JP

We were pleased to meet you and the staff recently and enjoyed the time we spent with you. Thank you for making us feel so welcome, talking to us, and helping us to find out about you and your school. We especially enjoyed seeing you play and work together cooperatively and watching you politely carry out your jobs, which help to make your school a pleasant place. Your plans for the vegetable garden sound very exciting!

Your school is satisfactory. Those who lead the school, the teachers and all the other grown-ups do their best to look after and care for you. Your good behaviour in class helps you to learn. It is clear that you are happy at school. Your teachers and your friends help you to feel important and safe there.

The school is keen to find ways to help you do as well as you can, so we have asked those who lead the school to make sure that:

- more of you do better in mathematics and science
- lessons move more quickly and that you get time to practise what you are learning in different ways
- plans to improve your school will contain information that makes it very clear what the improvements will look like when they are successful.

We are sure that Miss Whant and all the other adults will continue to do all they can to help you. You can play your part by continuing to work hard, behaving well and by coming to school every day.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Joanne Harvey

Lead inspector