

Newport Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123384
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	314583
Inspection date	11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Graham Sims

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Williams
Headteacher	Becky Overthrow
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
School address	Granville Avenue Newport TF10 7DX
Telephone number	01952 386610
Fax number	01952 386612

Age group	4-7
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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: pupils' progress in reading and writing, progress of children in the Foundation Stage and the quality of the curriculum. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and an analysis of parents' views. 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, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Newport Infant School is slightly smaller than most primary schools, although numbers fluctuate during the year, as half of the Reception-aged children join the school in September and half in January. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Standards of attainment on entry to the school vary widely within each year group and from one year to the next. Generally, they are typical of what is expected of four-year-old children. The entry level for those who took their tests in Year 2 in 2007 was above average, whereas for those now in Year 1, it was below average. The school received a BECTA Award in 2006 and was re-accredited with a Healthy Schools Gold Award in 2007.

The headteacher was seconded to another school at the beginning of September 2007 and has subsequently been permanently appointed to that post. At the time of the inspection, the school was being run by the deputy headteacher as acting headteacher. The roles of Foundation Stage coordinator and special educational needs coordinator were assumed by different staff after the retirement of the previous postholder in August 2007. The school now houses a children's centre which was opened in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

It is easy to see why parents, staff and pupils like this good school so much, as it has a number of outstanding features. The school has maintained all of the positive features noted in its previous inspection report and provides an excellent curriculum and outstanding care, guidance and support for its pupils. As one parent aptly wrote, 'The caring ethos of Newport Infants is evident from the moment you enter the school. This ensures that all children are happy and secure and, therefore, ready to learn and achieve their best.'

Pupils of all abilities certainly achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been above average in reading, writing and mathematics for many years, indicating that pupils make good progress from their varying starting points. Test results for the more able cohort which left in 2007 were well above the national average. Almost every pupil reached the expected Level 2 and a high proportion reached Level 3 in reading and mathematics. Following its last inspection, the school successfully tackled an issue relating to the reading skills of its less able pupils. Every day now begins with a variety of reading activities which stretch the more able and provide differing degrees of support for others, reflecting the high quality support and academic guidance provided by the teachers and teaching assistants. Some children make excellent progress because of the different levels of intervention and the excellent partnership with various agencies and with parents.

A rich, vibrant and interesting curriculum, good teaching and the encouragement of the staff are key factors in helping pupils to make good progress in their writing. Not as many pupils reached Level 3 in writing as in reading in 2007, but many pupils display a real desire to write about their interesting topics, their visits to places of interest and their investigations. This interest is fostered from the very start in Reception. Different topics are planned to integrate work across a range of subjects and to provide a purpose for writing and the development of other key skills, such as in information and communication technology (ICT). The reason pupils do not achieve at an even higher level is because staff do not give pupils enough indication as to where they have made mistakes or where they might improve their work or provide enough opportunity for them to reflect and learn from their mistakes.

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children settle into the Reception classes quickly and well. The school is a happy, joyful community where good behaviour, good relationships, cooperation and a sense of fun are the norm. Often, the pupils' behaviour is excellent as a result of the care provided by the staff, the intrinsic interest of many lessons and the range of activities and equipment provided for children at breaktimes. A small number of pupils have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties, but the support of the staff and the afternoon nurture group help some of these to make excellent progress in overcoming their difficulties and to learn to conform to the norms of the school community.

The school does much to encourage pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles and safe practices and most pupils have a good understanding of what is required, such as eating a healthy diet, drinking plenty of water and taking exercise. However, the school's good efforts could be more fully supported at home by some parents. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school community through their considerate behaviour and by willingly undertaking various responsibilities. Older pupils act as 'playground buddies' to support and organise playground games. School council representatives look for ways of making the school an even better place.

Through their good social skills, good standards of literacy, numeracy and ICT and their positive dispositions, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Although the school is currently in a period of transition awaiting the appointment of a new headteacher later in the school year, there has clearly been good leadership in the past, which has been particularly successful in building a united team of hard-working staff committed to the well-being of the pupils. Management systems are effective. Staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths, a willingness to try out new ideas and the perseverance to see initiatives through. Good arrangements have been made to ensure the smooth running of the school in the capable hands of the acting headteacher. Despite a certain amount of uncertainty over the future leadership, the otherwise stable staffing situation and the school's past successes show that there is good capacity for further improvement in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress during their time in the Reception classes and standards are generally above expectations by the time they start Year 1. Last year, a larger proportion than normal was still working towards the expected goals, but the school's assessment data show that these pupils had made at least satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage mirrors that in the rest of the school. Good teaching, an excellent curriculum and the very high standard of care help to ensure that children settle quickly and greatly enjoy being at school. Teachers plan a good variety of activities where children are taught or supervised in small groups by adults and provide good opportunities for children to learn through self-directed activities. The way in which different activities are woven into an overarching topic is excellent. New facilities provide children with an attractive outdoor environment which is already providing them with enriching learning experiences. Comprehensive records are passed on at the end of the Reception year to teachers in Year 1, but the initial assessments made when children start school are not as wide-ranging, which makes it difficult to assess children's initial progress in all areas of learning. It is, nevertheless, clear enough to show that children achieve well during their first year or two terms at school.

What the school should do to improve further

- help pupils to consolidate their learning by providing more detailed marking and giving pupils more opportunity to reflect and identify how they could improve their work.

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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?	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	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	1
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	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?	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
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	2
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

12 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Newport Infant School, Newport, TF10 7DX

I really enjoyed coming to your school the other day to find out how well you are doing. You all told me that yours is a really good school, and I agree with you. There are so many good things that happen in your school and here are some of them:

- you are all making good progress in your work and you achieve better standards in reading, writing and mathematics than children in many schools
- you are polite, considerate and well-behaved and that makes it a real joy to come and visit your school
- some of you who attend the nurture group in the afternoon are making really good progress
- you receive good teaching from all of the adults who help you in school
- you are given an excellent range of things to do in school, and you really enjoy the topics which your teachers plan for you
- the way the staff provide you with care and support is excellent – it helps you to learn, makes you feel safe, and enables you to enjoy being at school
- although your headteacher is moving to another school, the acting headteacher, governors and staff are making sure that the school continues to run well.

In order to help you do even better in your work, we have asked your teachers to point out to you where you could make your writing even better than it is. We would like them then to give you more time to correct your work or make improvements so that you can learn from your mistakes and reach even higher standards.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me when I was with you. I hope that you will all continue to enjoy coming to school and to try your hardest so that you are successful in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Graham Sims Lead inspector

Annex B

12 October 2007

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Lead inspector