

Newbridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131019
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	315699
Inspection dates	2–3 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Lorna Brackstone

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Powell
Headteacher	John Croker
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Charmouth Road Bath BA1 3LL
Telephone number	01225 421675
Fax number	01225 465168

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This new large primary school opened in September 2006 as a result of an amalgamation between a Church of England infant school and a community junior school. After considerable consultation, the decision to make this new primary a community school was finally made by an independent adjudicator. There was much job uncertainty for the staff both prior to amalgamation and in the early period of the new school. The new headteacher did not start until January 2007 when much of his time was spent dealing with a major dispute over access to the site. At the time of the inspection the school was half way through a substantial building project. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Children start school with standards that are above national expectations, particularly in personal and social development and in language and counting skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Newbridge Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and its own selfevaluation agrees with this judgement. The quality and provision of the Foundation Stage is sound. The headteacher has successfully raised staff morale. He has an accurate understanding of the developmental stage of the school, explaining that 'base camp has now been established and we are now ready to climb the mountain'. Given that the school is at an early stage of development, it is judged to have a satisfactory capacity to improve. The high levels of personal development seen in children when they start school is well maintained as they move through the school. This is because spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is strong. Good attention is given to encouraging top quality behaviour and this ensures pupils are polite, courteous and safe young people. The challenge for raising funds to improve the school building has captivated the pupils' interest and enabled them to understand fully the significance of working together both in groups and as a community. The visual display of how these funds are growing has ensured that pupils acknowledge the value of money and appreciate the efforts of those involved in the fund raising activities. Sport has a high priority in the curriculum and this has resulted in pupils developing a secure knowledge of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The effective links with other schools supports this well and pupils have good opportunities to interact with the community. Throughout the school the teaching staff have continued to provide a sound level of provision during a difficult time. Whilst pupils attain above average standards at the end of Year 6 and overall achievement is satisfactory, the school knows that some individuals do not perform as well as they could. Systems which check individual progress are currently being adopted and the information they gather will be used to set work that challenges all pupils. Whilst systems for evaluating what goes on in school are in the early stage of development, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching. They have pinpointed the strengths but are fully aware of the areas needing to be developed and know that these must be integrated into staff training. Newly appointed senior leaders have started to share high quality practice but this is not consistent throughout the school. The vast majority of parents are very happy with the school. Most of their views are reflected by one parent who explained that 'My children do seem to be having the time of their lives. The teachers are helpful and enthusiastic; there are lots of opportunities/events both inside and out of the classroom.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

A strength of the Foundation Stage provision is the way the outdoor area is used as an integral part of the school day. This enables the children to make good use of a well-resourced and interesting environment. Teaching staff work closely together and plan a satisfactory range of whole-class, group and individual activities. Themes such as nursery rhymes are carefully planned and shared with parents to help develop links with home. Good use is made of games and songs, such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs' to help with counting and language skills. Whilst some children are given opportunities to talk to partners about their learning, at times, too much instruction is given to them, and this results in missed opportunities for children to work on their own. Most children achieve satisfactorily in Reception and start Year 1 with standards that exceed the expected levels for this age group. The progress made by the children is carefully observed but not used with sufficient rigour to ensure that the activities planned meet the needs of the more able children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the new procedures for tracking pupils' progress to check that all pupils achieve as well as they should.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent throughout the school.
- Develop the role of the newly appointed subject leaders across all age groups. 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 the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and standards are broadly average. In Year 6 current standards are above average and, in relation to the pupils' prior attainment, achievement is satisfactory. Girls do not achieve as well as they could and appropriate action has been introduced recently to rectify this. Involvement in writing and mathematics projects has started to raise achievement for the more able pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The good attendance levels reflect the pupils' enjoyment of all aspects of school life. They behave well because they have a clear understanding of the accepted code of conduct and know that misdemeanours are suitably rectified through 'community service'! Pupils feel safe in school because they know that any adult in school will deal with their worries or concerns. The school council is an effective vehicle for pupils to express their views. For example, the implementation of a football rota at playtime is the result of pupil consultation. The good range of sporting activities, both within the school day and afterwards, ensures that pupils have a good understanding of keeping fit. The need to eat balanced meals and healthy snacks is very clear to the pupils. Fund raising for the 'Renewbridge' improvement project has enabled pupils to have a full involvement in their own community. The events they have organised to raise money such as cake sales, fairs and talent shows have resulted in the pupils having a good understanding of financial enterprise skills. There is good involvement in school sporting tournaments and music festivals within other schools and in Bath Abbey. Pupils have a strong personal identity with the cultural heritage of Bath but links further afield are at an earlier stage of development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are well planned and good use is made of resources that interest the pupils. Activities like mini archaeological digs during history sessions ensure that learning moves along at a good pace. Effective questioning skills that include all pupils and clear explanations by teachers support the pupils' learning well. Subject knowledge is secure and resources, for example using a light source to demonstrate the seasonal effect of the sun, promote learning efficiently. A number of foundation subjects are taught by specialists and pupils achieve well in these. Teaching is not always as effective as it could be. On occasions teachers' expectations are not

high enough and do not take the needs of all the pupils into consideration. At times, pupils are required to sit for too long which results in them disengaging in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The good uptake of the wide and interesting range of extra-curricular activities ensures that the pupils, including some of the younger ones, experience fun, fellowship and fitness. Visits to the SS Great Britain and Willsbridge help to make learning more relevant and enable the pupils to know about local heritage within their own community. Residential trips, for example to the Isle of Wight, are used to make links between different subjects. However, cross-curricular links are not yet used consistently through the school to ensure that all the pupils' needs are met.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Support and guidance for pupils' personal development are good and a result of the strong relationships enjoyed between adults and pupils and a robust programme for personal, social, health and emotional development. The utmost care ensures that pupils are safe and secure, and is reflected in the recent revision of policies and practice. The support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good because monitoring is secure and benefits from advice provided by external agencies. There are new systems in place to track pupils' progress and staff have started to develop a better understanding of how their pupils are doing over time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The good leadership of the headteacher is enabling the school to develop a consistent approach to its day-to-day life. Leaders and managers have made a good start in identifying the strengths and developmental areas for their subjects. As accurately reflected in the school improvement plan, subject leaders have yet to work across the full age range. This means that the school is still not yet working as a fully cohesive primary school, resulting in uneven pupil progress. An awareness of the need to move pupils on further in their learning has resulted in the setting of targets that are more challenging for pupils to achieve. Governors support the school well but recognise that they need to have a greater knowledge of its performance. The newly formed links between governors and subject leaders are already proving to be a way forward in rectifying this.

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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	NA
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	2

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

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?	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 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

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

2 October 2007 Dear Pupils Inspection of Newbridge Primary School, Bath, BA1 3LL A big thank you for making us feel so welcome at your school. We enjoyed spending time with you and finding out all about Newbridge Primary. We would like to say a special thank you to those pupils who talked to us about your school. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Year 6 pupils are working at an above average level in their work and satisfactory progress is made throughout the school. Teaching is sound and, although some of you could do much harder work, you like the work that you do, particularly when it is linked to interesting visits out of school. We were impressed with your good behaviour and it was clear that you really enjoy taking a full part in school life. We thought you had a good knowledge about keeping fit and healthy. You feel safe because the school looks after you well and there is always someone you can talk to about a problem. Your headteacher and his staff are keen to work together to give you the best education. We have asked your school to use the information they gather on the work you do to check that you are all making sufficient progress. We have asked the teachers to involve you more in your learning and plan work that gives you extra challenge. We have also asked the subject leaders to make sure that they develop stronger links across all age groups. Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Newbridge Primary gets better and better. With best wishes Lorna Brackstone Lead inspector



2 October 2007

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Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults to make sure that Newbridge Primary gets better and better.

With best wishes

Lorna Brackstone
Lead inspector