

Newall Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105430
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	324222
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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)	575
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 Neil Wilson
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Rudd
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Firbank Road Wythenshawe Manchester Lancashire M23 2YH
Telephone number	0161 437 2872
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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 larger than average school is located in an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. Almost half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Most pupils are White British. An increasing number of pupils speak English as an additional language. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises either part-time or full-time Nursery classes followed by Reception. The school also provides a breakfast club and after-school care. The school has Healthy Schools status and has achieved Activemark for its promotion of pupils' physical activity. The headteacher took up her post in January 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Good leadership and management have brought about rapid improvement over the past year. The school has some good features.

Pupils enjoy school because of the variety of things they do. They say that lessons are fun because there are lots of practical tasks and they get on well with their teachers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has a positive impact on their good overall personal development. They are kind and generally thoughtful about their relationships with others and develop good awareness of faiths and cultures other than their own because of the school's good promotion of community cohesion. Pupils feel safe in the playground. They say that adults take really good care of them and that bullying and racist name calling are now rare. Behaviour is good overall. Pupils' attitudes have improved significantly because of the way in which relationships are managed and expectations are made clear. They are attentive in lessons, work hard, behave sensibly around the school and take pride in what they do. They are polite and helpful. Attendance is improving steadily. It is similar to that of schools locally, and is satisfactory. Pupils develop good attitudes and contribute well to their community by acting as school council members, helping to conserve energy and water in the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards developing the skills they need to secure their future economic well-being. There are productive links with the local high school but generally few opportunities for pupils to develop enterprise skills or prepare for the world of work.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their starting points are very low when they enter Nursery. Despite good progress their skills are still below expectations for their age when they leave Reception. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout Years 1 to 6. Standards were below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2008. Results in assessments for Year 2 indicated an improvement, however test results at the end of Year 6 showed little change in English, and mathematics and science results declined. This picture has improved during the current year. Better use of learning targets has raised teachers' expectations. Progress is gathering pace because of more effective teaching. The school has focused well on improving writing but recognises that there is still further progress to be made in both writing and science especially in the number of pupils who reach the higher levels. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is planned well and they make satisfactory progress in relation to their particular learning targets.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Rigorous monitoring and professional development means that all teaching is now satisfactory or better but there is still scope to improve the number of good lessons. Planning has improved and teachers use a variety of methods to engage pupils enjoyably in learning. The curriculum adequately meets the needs of most pupils and enables their satisfactory achievement. Strengths of provision are the good range of after-school clubs and the progress made in introducing French to the curriculum.

The headteacher has had an enormous impact on quality and standards in the school since she took up her post. She has secured the well-being of staff and pupils and established clear and effective structures for leaders and managers to monitor and evaluate the school's work. This has led to significant improvements in pupils' attitudes and the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Combined with the exceptional pastoral care provided, the impact on progress and standards is rewarding. The school's commitment to inclusion ensures that pupils are cared for

and supported equally whatever their particular needs. Governors challenge and support the school well. They are strong critical partners in helping to plan its future progress. They watch over finances carefully and ensure that money is spent wisely on school improvement. Together, leaders amply demonstrate their ability to bring about good improvement and there is good capacity for the school to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children start in Nursery their abilities in all areas of learning are very low in relation to expectations for their age. Their learning and development is managed well overall. By the end of their Reception Year most children are working within the early learning goals, though none achieve all of them. Teachers and assistants are skilled at promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children happily settle into routines, learn to work well alongside others and behave well. Early reading and writing skills get off to a good start because children are taught how to link letters and sounds. This gives them confidence with books and when attempting their own writing. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those that children choose for themselves. The outside area is used satisfactorily to help children develop skills and understanding through play activities. Staff recognise that planning for this aspect of learning needs to be strengthened. Provision for children's welfare is good. Children's safety is given high priority and each member of staff has responsibility for a group of children. All staff are involved in assessing children's progress and planning the next steps in learning. Parents are welcomed and are encouraged to take part in the process of their children's learning by helping them to reach targets and sharing information and assessments.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be 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

Improved teaching and more effective target setting has begun to show a positive impact on current standards. Standards overall are currently broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory overall. The school's assessment data indicates that pupils in Years 2 and 6 are now on track to meet more challenging targets. There has not been continuous progress over time. Nevertheless, due to more stringent monitoring recently and higher expectations, progress is now picking up throughout the school. Positive measures have been taken to improve writing and there is increased emphasis on scientific investigation throughout the school. Although the impact of these recent initiatives is promising, the school acknowledges that there is still some way to go. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given extra help and monitoring shows that they make steady progress. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have carefully planned provision and, overall, make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about school. They enjoy the range of activities provided and mention, especially, science days, gardening and 'golden time' among their favourite things to do. Even the youngest pupils know about the importance of healthy eating and exercise. Sports are very popular and after-school clubs are well attended. Relationships are generally good and pupils behave well. They know how to keep themselves safe. They are keen to accept responsibilities in school. The school council ensures that all have a voice in deciding on improvements. The eco-council raises awareness of 'green' issues such as recycling and energy conservation, while others take on caring roles such as acting as playground buddies and helping to run the tuck shop. Caring attitudes are also fostered well through opportunities provided for pupils to look after the large collection of animals, including sheep and chickens. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing the skills they need for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although teaching has improved over the past year there are some inconsistencies to iron out and the overall quality is satisfactory. Relationships are usually good. Pupils feel safe and know that teachers value their efforts and this underpins satisfactory progress in lessons. Teachers use a variety of methods and resources to interest and motivate pupils who generally respond well and are keen to get down to activities. Sometimes the early pace and enthusiasm is lost because teachers spend too long on explanations resulting in too little time for pupils to enjoy the practical work. Teachers plan well for pupils' varying abilities so that they have the right level of challenge and support. Better use of assessment information is helping teachers to focus on learning targets and plan more effectively. Teaching assistants give valuable support to pupils individually and in group activities but do not have a sufficiently clear role during the early part of lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily overall. There is sufficient emphasis on basic literacy and mathematical skills. Writing skills are developed well across subjects and this is helping to raise standards. Information and communication technology is not used routinely as a tool for learning in all classes. There is good provision for sport and music. Pupils' learning is also enriched by French lessons. There is a good selection of sports and other activities outside of lesson time to help pupils develop their individual skills and interests. This is supplemented by a calendar of visitors and visits, including residential, which broaden pupils' first-hand experiences well and nurture their personal development. The popular, and well managed, after-school care also provides pupils with good opportunities to develop interests and to mix socially with others. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship is firmly established. The school enlists the help of community groups such as health and emergency services to ensure that pupils are aware of the potential dangers surrounding drugs and other substances. Pupils also learn about the importance of safe and reliable relationships and how to face up to choices about their personal well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents agree overwhelmingly that their children are well cared for in school. The school does all that it can to ensure that this is so. Required safeguarding procedures are in place. Provision for the most vulnerable pupils is outstanding. Sensitive and well-managed individual support helps pupils to reflect on their personal difficulties so that they are more able to learn alongside others. The school reaches out to families and provides social support by way of parent learning classes. Strategies to improve attendance are working. A school social worker keeps in touch with families who have most difficulty and the rewards and encouragement in school are paying dividends. Pupils receive excellent support and guidance regarding behaviour and safe relationships. Systems for checking whole-school academic progress provide a sound basis for target setting. This is helping to inform teachers' planning. Assessment that involves pupils themselves in evaluating their progress and setting new targets is developing well throughout the school. Pupils receive clear guidance about their progress in writing from teachers' marking and this is increasingly helping them to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, and more recently appointed deputy headteachers, have had an immense impact on quality and standards in the school. They have built a cohesive and well motivated staff team that is committed to improvement and know how they are accountable for the school's success. After initial local authority support the school is well able now to stand on its own two feet. Following an incisive audit of the school's work and an accurate evaluation of its needs, leaders' energy and drive have set the school on a clear path to improvement. Inclusion is central to school planning. It recognises diversity and promotes community cohesion well. The school responds extremely well to local needs linked to health and social support. Pupils learn about different cultures and festivals through the curriculum. They are in communication with pupils from a school in Kenya who benefit from the support that Newall Green pupils organise. A project has been planned that involves pupils in workshops led by different church groups so that they gain a broader view of the Easter story. There is also an action plan for further multi-faith activities. Governors are strongly committed to the school's success and fulfil their responsibilities well.

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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	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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?	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?	3
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?	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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Thank you very much for the warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and the things you like about your school. We found you to be polite and well mannered and that you behave well. We were also pleased to find that your attendance is improving. All of those things are very important so do try hard to keep them up. The grown-ups in school take good care of you and your teachers work hard to make your lessons fun.

Although there are some good things about your school, overall, it is judged to be satisfactory. You make satisfactory progress and, although that is improving, the standards you reach in your work should be higher. Your parents, teachers and school governors are proud of you but they want you to do even better. To help that happen I have asked your teachers to help all of you to reach higher standards in writing and in science. I have also asked teachers to make sure that every lesson is as good and as much fun as the very best. Of course you have a part to play too. You must make sure that you always keep your eye on those targets and do your very best work every day.