

Newport Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114985
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	326105
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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)	134
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 P Hill
Headteacher	Mrs J Detnon
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Frambury Lane Newport Essex CB11 3PU
Telephone number	01799 540055
Fax number	01799 541974

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size school. The vast majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. Boys outnumber girls, especially in Key Stage 2. Falling numbers have led to the amalgamation of the Reception class and Year 1. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the September of the year that they are five. Children with summer birthdays join part time until the end of December. The majority start with levels of knowledge and skills that are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Their language and communication skills are slightly below average. A below average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or a statement of special educational needs. A much higher percentage of pupils join the school at times other than those expected. Most of this group join in the latter stages of Key Stage 2, in preparation for secondary provision nearby.

Since 2006, a private provider, 'Oliver's Lodge', has offered on-site provision for pre-school children and a breakfast club and after school club. This provision is independent of the school and is subject to a separate inspection report.

The school holds numerous awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark. It had its Healthy Schools Award renewed in 2008. In 2009, it attained the Financial Management in Schools Standard. The school cooks have achieved the Uttlesford Bronze and Silver awards for providing healthy foods.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Newport Primary School is a good school. The school's caring and close-knit community is fundamental to pupils' happiness and positive attitudes. Parents are very supportive of 'the excellent balance of learning, support and social skills' that the school offers. It has moved forward well since the last inspection, particularly in the good quality of outdoor provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

From the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, pupils thrive. The leadership and management are good. Staff work effectively to provide opportunities for pupils to develop into responsible young people. Senior and subject leaders employ good systems to promote pupils' progress in learning. They are led effectively in this by the headteacher, resulting in prompt identification of strengths, as well as matters that require improvement. Leaders enable the school to develop its provision to match pupils' interests, needs and aspirations and demonstrate its good capacity for improvement. Governors increasingly challenge and support the school's staff in their drive to move the school further forward. However, the evaluation of policies and procedures, which they oversee, is not frequent enough to ensure that all health and safety practices meet requirements and demonstrate good practice. For this reason, the care, guidance and support for pupils is no better than satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is good. Their excellent behaviour and good attendance are encouraged by a good curriculum. Creative partnerships with other primary schools help to extend learning opportunities successfully. Pupils know the importance of keeping healthy and safe and increasingly adopt healthy lifestyles. An increasing focus on learning in the local community helps pupils to understand their part in their neighbourhood. To a growing extent, this is also developing into actions further afield. A wide range of visits, visitors and the very popular after school clubs broaden and enliven learning. All contribute to the good skills that pupils gain in preparation for secondary school.

The starting point for pupils' good achievement is the school's supportive climate for learning, based on good teaching. Pupils say that if they raise concerns, these are dealt with effectively and their school is a place in which they learn and play safely. Through regular tracking, staff monitor and assess pupils' social and emotional progress, so the level and nature of support by teachers and teaching assistants is effective. Parents, through formal presentations and individual meetings, are well involved in their children's education. This not only strengthens home and school relationships, but also enables parents to be partners in their children's learning.

The standards that pupils reach by the end of Years 2 and 6 are variable in the small year groups. Currently, they are above average and demonstrate pupils' good progress through the school. This is due to good teaching and learning, including the effective ways that teachers use computers to raise interest. The school's focus on providing greater challenge for more able pupils has led to an increase in the percentage achieving higher levels by the end of Year 6. However, Year 6 tests indicate that writing standards are below those in other subjects. While the new strategies in place to overcome this are starting to pay off lower down the school, test results in Year 6 show that there is some way to go.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with standards broadly in line with those found nationally. They settle in quickly because of the good induction procedures, which mark the beginning of very constructive relationships between the school and parents. The decision of the Early Years Foundation Stage leader to set up a joint reading (phonics) programme with the pre-school provider is helping children to make up the shortfall in their language and communication skills before they start school. Children's personal development is good. They enjoy being in school and develop the confidence to take responsibility, encouraged by the great support of the older pupils, both in helping them to settle in and assisting them with their learning. The younger children follow the example of older pupils' actions, behave well and cooperate with others in playing and learning. The curriculum and everyday routines teach them the importance of healthy habits. For example, the children grow, prepare and cook vegetables as part of the much improved outdoor provision. Children's welfare and security are an important focus and meet requirements.

Children make good progress in their learning with many reaching above average levels by the end of the stage. Planning of activities is good in the mixed age groups, because the teacher knows the levels at which activities need to be set. A well balanced mix of teacher-directed and child-led opportunities are in place. Children are therefore exposed to all areas of learning and gain knowledge well independently, as well as in groups. Records based on broad observations of children's learning inform future planning in all areas of learning. Good leadership and management are also demonstrated by the leader's understanding of how the provision can develop further through effective and regular self-evaluation.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that the new strategies for improving writing are consistently applied through the school, to help raise standards.
- Carry out regular and robust evaluations of policies and procedures and consistently apply recording systems to ensure that all health and safety practices meet requirements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 6 are above average, as shown by provisional test results and pupils' work over time. Standards vary from year to year, because year groups are small and there is relatively high pupil mobility. Pupils make good progress from broadly average starting points. Those with learning difficulties and the more able also make good progress. In 2008 and 2009, attainment by the end of Year 2 has been above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards by the end of Year 6 have improved from 2008 when they were in line with national standards overall and below average in science. This year's results in Years 2 and 6 show that standards in writing remain lower than those in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

In this caring and friendly community, pupils in all year groups develop a good range of skills for the next stage of their education. This is demonstrated particularly clearly in the support that Years 5 and 6 pupils show to Reception children in their role as 'buddies' and in the shared

writing projects between Year 1 and Year 5. Pupils contribute constructively towards improvement through their school council. Year 6 pupils apply for specific responsibilities and value the posts that they are awarded. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep fit, eat healthily and keep safe, all of which are supported effectively through the curriculum. School lunches are nutritious and deservedly very popular. The staff set strong moral standards and act as good role models, to which pupils respond with excellent behaviour, good attendance and care for each other. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show sensitivity towards the circumstances, beliefs and lifestyles of others. They demonstrate much enthusiasm for fund raising for charities, both near to and far from home. It is one of the ways in which the school is helping pupils to understand and value the diversity of the world in which we live.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching and an effective curriculum result in pupils making good progress. Happy relationships between pupils and staff and colourful classrooms full of displays of pupils' work provide a positive environment for learning. Planning of lessons is based on accurate information about the levels at which pupils are learning and activities generally match pupils' different abilities and needs well. Consequently, pupils focus well on their learning. Teachers usually provide a good balance of face-to-face teaching and opportunities for pupils to learn for themselves, although on occasions they talk for too long. When this happens, pupils sometimes lose concentration. Pupils enjoy computer-based learning, and a good variety of tasks and opportunities to learn for themselves, all of which are common strengths of teaching. Marking is usually very helpful, particularly in literacy, because it informs pupils what they have learnt and gives the next steps in learning. The new strategies for teaching writing are not always consistently applied in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an interesting and varied programme to help children to learn. It contributes well to their good progress and to their personal development. Focusing on raising standards further in literacy and numeracy, the school is also developing a more skills-based curriculum through topics, which engages pupils well. Gifted and talented workshops for a range of subjects are one example of the school's good partnership arrangements with other primary schools. The school also provides good opportunities of its own for the more able in mathematics and science. Pupils who find some aspects of learning difficult are provided for through a range of good strategies. Visits and visitors help pupils to understand the relevance of what they learn, such as the visit to the Duxford War museum. Personal, social and health education is built into each lesson and specific topics are taught across subjects, as well as discretely. This includes weekly French lessons for Key Stage 2 pupils by a specialist teacher and music through the school. Pupils are delighted with the wide range of after school clubs, which are well subscribed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel secure and are well looked after. Although most procedures are in place to help to keep them safe and healthy, systems for recording and monitoring health and safety matters are not all sufficiently formalised. Nevertheless, staff know pupils' needs and circumstances accurately. Sensitive and caring arrangements, sometimes incorporating outside agencies, are in place for those pupils who are unwell or who have worries or concerns. Their progress is tracked so that those who are vulnerable are helped promptly and appropriately. Pupils say that the transition arrangements, for those pupils moving to secondary school, which include taster days, are very helpful in preparing them for the move. The regular communication with parents contributes to pupils' happiness in school and their positive attitudes to learning. In particular, a curriculum meeting known as 'The Year Ahead' informs parents about learning for the next academic year and how they can support their children.

Academic guidance of pupils has been strengthened since the last inspection. Information about the levels at which pupils work is used carefully to assess their progress and leads to good support and guidance. Pupils' targets are used effectively to support teaching and learning. Older pupils benefit from the critical skills that they are developing by evaluating each other's work, in what is a developing aspect of the school's work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides clear direction for the school, supported well by the deputy headteacher. Planning for improvement is focused very appropriately on issues raised by the school's monitoring of its own performance. It has led to good improvement since the last inspection, including the outdoor provision for learning and in particular, in pupils' behaviour. The staff, all of whom are valued in their roles, show great commitment and are involved in decisions about school improvement. Focused subject leaders are strengthening the school through their good understanding of the quality of education in their areas. The governing body is increasingly effective in challenging and supporting the work of the school. Members are also adding to the quality of pupils' experiences and parental involvement through meetings with the school council and an electronic system of communication. However, some of the governors' monitoring of procedures is not carried out systematically enough. Community cohesion has developed well within the school and neighbourhood. International links are being established.

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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?	2
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 learners' needs?	2
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?	3

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 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	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**

10 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newport Primary School, Newport, CB11 3PU

I am writing to tell you about the judgements that I made when I visited your school recently. First, thank you for your politeness and friendliness towards me. You were also very helpful in showing me round. I send special thanks to those of you that I met and those who showed me your paintings and computer presentations. It was good to hear that you really enjoy school and to find out from you about all of the activities that go on there.

Your school is a good school. It is also a happy school, in which you get on well with each other, support each other and behave excellently. You make good progress in lessons because teaching is good. I am pleased that you are using targets to guide your learning and that marking of your work is helpful in telling you what you need to do next. Both of these things help you to make quicker progress. I agree with you that after school activities are good and help you to develop new skills and interests. You enjoy using computers to learn things for yourselves. You also enjoy learning through topics because you can learn more this way.

Your headteacher has made good improvements to the school, particularly the outdoors area for the Early Years Foundation Stage children. This means that the youngest among you are learning and exploring a lot more outside than you were able to do before. There are ways in which your school can improve. All of the staff are keen to make sure that standards in writing get better and will work towards this. Presently, they are not as good as those in other subjects. I have also asked your headteacher, deputy headteacher and the governors to make sure that all of the policies and arrangements that are in place to ensure that the school works safely are checked carefully and regularly and any findings recorded clearly.

You can help by continuing to behave so well and working hard.

I wish you all a happy summer break.

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector