

# Newton-on-Trent CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120578
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327311
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rosemary Eaton

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	54
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Jenkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Chris White
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	High Street Newton-on-trent Lincoln Lincolnshire LN1 2JS

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 January 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	327311

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school serving a rural area. A smaller than average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are White British but a very small minority are from Traveller communities of Irish background. None of the pupils from Traveller communities were attending the school at the time of the inspection. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average although some year groups have a high proportion of pupils with needs such as autistic spectrum disorders and dyslexia. There are currently nine children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The children are taught in a class with Year 1 pupils. The other two classes are for pupils in Years 2 and 3 and Years 4 to 6 respectively. The headteacher teaches one class for approximately half of each week. The school has gained the Activemark award. Some lessons and activities take place in the church, which is adjacent to the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It has a number of good features, which include the provision made for children in the EYFS. Throughout the school, pupils' personal development is good. They are happy here and like being part of a small school where everyone knows them well. Pupils feel safe because they are cared for well. Strong links with a wide range of agencies and professionals contribute to the good quality support the school provides. This is one reason why the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

For the most part, progress and achievement are satisfactory, in line with the quality of teaching. Teachers take good account of the mixed ages represented in each class. They often plan different activities for pupils in the various year groups. Teaching does not always meet the needs of the highest attaining pupils. They are sometimes given the same tasks as pupils who teachers' assessments show are working at lower levels. Standards fluctuate dramatically from year to year. The number of pupils in each year group is often very small and so each one has a huge impact on the proportion reaching the levels expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, standards are broadly average. They are lowest in writing. Pupils' handwriting and spelling are often weak.

Pupils have a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Most are very keen on physical education and take part enthusiastically in lessons and clubs. The variety of opportunities for pupils to be active is a good feature of the curriculum, which is satisfactory overall. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the regular 'Fun to Learn' days, when they work in mixed age groups to pursue topics such as 'The Seaside'. In some instances Year 6 pupils take responsibility for planning and leading the day's activities, an excellent example of the good contribution pupils make to the school community.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher ensures that the school provides pupils with opportunities to develop positive attitudes and self-confidence, so that the prospect of moving on to large secondary schools does not daunt them. The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses. However, the headteacher, governors and the teachers responsible for key subjects do not always analyse the wealth of assessment data sufficiently rigorously in order to raise standards. For example, they do not compare the progress made by different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls, in order to check that none of them is disadvantaged by teaching or the curriculum. The spirit of teamwork amongst staff and the support of governors help to provide the necessary capacity for continued improvement, building on the satisfactory progress made since the previous inspection.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When they join the Reception class, children's skills vary greatly but tend to be below expectations for their age. They make good progress especially in communication, language and literacy and their knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the year, most children are working at broadly average levels. Their skills are weakest in writing. Teaching is good. Each day is planned carefully with activities well matched to each child's age and stage of development. The classroom is organised so children can choose and collect resources and be independent learners. Increasingly, they learn and play together and are inquisitive and confident. The spacious outdoor area is not used to the full to promote learning. For example,

the classroom includes an abundance of stimulating activities linked to the current theme of 'Me and My Teddy'. Resources outdoors do not project a similar focus. Message books have recently been introduced to enable staff and parents to share information about children. Parents' observations are valued and included in the 'scrap books' that detail each child's development. Staff give children's welfare high priority. Leadership and management are good. The two teachers are clear about how they intend the provision to develop.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in writing, focusing on spelling and handwriting.
- Ensure teaching consistently challenges the higher attaining pupils to reach the levels of which they are capable.
- Analyse assessment information rigorously in order to enable leaders to raise standards.

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**

Standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average but vary each year according to the pupils' individual starting points. Year-on-year comparisons indicate no clear overall trend of decline or improvement. However, standards in reading have risen in recent years because the school has focused its efforts on this aspect of English. Typically, smaller than average proportions of pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the higher National Curriculum levels, especially in writing. A scrutiny of their work confirms that by the time they are in Year 6, pupils often spell simple words incorrectly and their handwriting lacks fluency. Pupils are not short of ideas for writing. They are held back by practicalities.

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, such as autistic spectrum disorders or dyslexia, often make good progress because their individual needs are met well. Pupils from Traveller backgrounds make at least satisfactory progress during the periods they attend the school because the school works in close partnership with the local authority's support service.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well aware of the foods to enjoy freely and those to eat in moderation. Many enjoy and appreciate the recent introduction of hot school meals. They also take great pleasure in the firm friendships they make. Pupils learn a great deal about how to keep themselves safe, for example, as pedestrians and cyclists and when using the internet. Behaviour is good. A few pupils need help in order to behave well. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying and know how to respond if they were to have any worries. Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils attend regularly but a small number have long periods of absence owing to the lifestyle of their families. Pupils demonstrate their concern for those in other countries through actions such as buying health insurance for mothers and babies in Ghana. They contribute to the local community, for example, by distributing their Harvest gifts. Pupils welcome new children into school whatever their background or circumstances. They readily take on jobs around school but do not have a forum through which they can take part in making decisions about school life. Broadly average

skills in important areas such as literacy and numeracy mean that pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is enthusiastic. This rubs off on pupils who settle to work with a will. Activities are often interesting with well-chosen resources. For example, a short video sequence of Roman soldiers preparing for battle helped pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 with their writing task. In some lessons, pupils have good opportunities to talk together in order to clarify their thoughts and put them into words before they start to write. Too frequently, teachers accept low standards of handwriting and presentation from pupils who are capable of much more. Teaching assistants make good contributions to learning, especially that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, they help pupils with autistic spectrum disorders to focus on their work. When necessary pupils' behaviour is managed well. Teachers make sure pupils focus on their work by pausing at intervals to remind them about the task or ask searching questions. Although higher attaining pupils have more demanding targets, they are too often provided with the same work as other pupils. This means that on these occasions they work at higher levels only if they feel so inclined.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum satisfactorily meets pupils' needs as they move up through the school. The varied physical education curriculum is supported by good links with other schools. These enable pupils to benefit from sports coaching and indoor activities such as gymnastics. The use of the church provides space which allows pupils to learn drumming and join in multi-skills activities. Community links also enhance the personal, social and health education programme through the contribution of the school nurse and police officers, for example. Some developments, including social and emotional aspects of learning and daily sessions during which all pupils learn independently, are quite recent. They need more time to become embedded in order to have an impact on pupils' progress and personal development. The plans for what is taught increasingly explore links between subjects, making learning more relevant. Opportunities are not always created for pupils to practise writing. Visits, for example, to the Fishing Heritage Museum, days devoted to themes such as Indian food and culture, and a range of popular clubs including cookery, French and netball, all enrich pupils' experiences well.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Parents are confident that the school takes good care of their children. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. The arrangements for child protection are rigorous and staff are well trained in this and in first aid. Importantly, staff know each pupil very well and quickly spot any changes in behaviour that might hinder their progress. Pupils who are finding learning especially difficult are identified speedily. A range of programmes is used to help boost the performance of these pupils. There are good arrangements to support pupils at points of transition, for example, the move to secondary education. The school offers opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. For example, meetings are devoted to topics

such as 'thinking skills'. In turn, a number of parents support the school, giving their time to activities, for example by leading clubs. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Teachers remind pupils about their targets in key areas such as numeracy. Marking is encouraging but does not consistently inform pupils how they can improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Without a senior staff team, the headteacher works very hard to lead the school and keep it moving forward whilst also fulfilling her teaching commitment. There are satisfactory arrangements to monitor and evaluate the school's work. Areas needing development feed into the plans for improving the school. Subject leaders and governors are becoming more involved in self-evaluation. The school is thoroughly committed to providing all pupils with equal opportunities and its work in this area is currently satisfactory. Leaders do not systematically check that the school's policies and practice are effective, by comparing the performance of different groups of pupils. The school is still establishing a planned approach to promoting community cohesion. The arrangements are satisfactory with some good features including the opportunities for pupils to mix together and to learn about the reality of life in other countries. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are working hard with the headteacher and efficient administrative support, successfully steering the budget back on track after difficulties in the past.



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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?	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 <sup>1</sup> 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	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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**

2 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newton-on-Trent CofE Primary School, LN1 2JS

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited your school. Special thanks go to the pupils who met me to talk about the school. The information you gave me was very helpful. I now need to tell you what I found out about the school.

Yours is a satisfactory school with some good features. One of these good aspects is your own personal development. It is clear that you enjoy school, behave well and know a great deal about being healthy and keeping safe. You also do a lot to help others, both in school and through your work for charities.

The standards you reach by Year 6 are similar to those in many other schools but your writing is not as good as it should be. I was surprised to see so much untidy handwriting and poor spelling. I have asked the school to help you improve your writing. I hope that you will try hard to reach higher standards. Your progress is satisfactory, although the pupils who find learning most difficult make good progress because of the extra help they receive. Those of you who should reach higher levels do not always have work that is hard enough. I want the school to see that you all have tasks set at just the right level. You can help by saying if your work is too hard or too easy.

You told me that you enjoy 'theme days' and clubs. The staff work hard to provide these interesting opportunities. I know that you feel safe in school and this is because you are looked after well. The school makes sure that the children in the Reception class get off to a good start.

Your headteacher and the staff and governors all want the school to improve. I have asked them to look more closely at all the information collected about your learning, so they can make sure you are all achieving as well as possible.

I would like to send each of you and the staff my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton

Lead inspector