

Newlands

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135201
Local Authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	329051
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Saleem Hussain

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	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	55
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	Peter Moorhouse
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Richardson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Waverley Road Middleton Manchester Lancashire M24 6JG
Telephone number	0161 655 0220
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

Newlands opened in September 2007 following an extensive local authority review of special educational needs provision in the area. It is co-located with a mainstream primary school which shares the premises.

The school provides for pupils who have severe and complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These include profound and multiple learning difficulties, autism, communication and language difficulties, physical disabilities and other specific learning difficulties. Some pupils have complicated medical needs, including special feeding needs. A significant number have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational need. Many pupils are from socially and economically disadvantaged areas with around half eligible for free school meals. The proportion of minority ethnic pupils is below the national average, as is the number learning English as an additional language. The school has achieved the Activemark and also the Extended Schools Award for its work in the community.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Newlands is a good school with some outstanding aspects. It provides good value for money. Representative views from parents include, 'when my son is at school, I feel he is in very good hands, is safe, happy and doing really well'. Though standards are exceptionally low owing to the severity of pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science because the quality of teaching and learning is good with some excellent features. Teachers and their assistants know pupils' special needs very well. They present the work in a practical way. This engages pupils effectively and so they enjoy working hard in lessons. However, the most able pupils are not always challenged as much as they could be, and this slightly reduces their progress.

The school works exceptionally well with outside agencies to ensure pupils' well-being and medical care. Links with other schools are very positive and help Newlands to promote community cohesion well. For example, the school has very close ties with a special school where the pupils have a contrasting cultural heritage and this supports pupils' awareness of diversity very effectively.

The curriculum is outstanding. It meets pupils' needs and interests very closely. A very strong emphasis on learning through using all the senses is making a significant contribution to learning. Pupils love the wide range of educational visits, swimming, hydrotherapy and chances to learn basic Spanish.

The school has a very strong family ethos. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensures that pupils develop very high levels of self-confidence and leads to excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils' sense of responsibility for themselves, their learning and towards helping others is stunning. Pupils are very thoughtful and considerate. They express themselves very clearly within the limitations of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school life very much and attendance is good. Pupils develop very positive attitudes towards healthy and safe living. For example, one pupil said 'you have to be very careful with anything electrical or you might end up with a nasty shock'. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy acting as classroom helpers. Pupils like taking part in the joint school council meetings with the co-located school, and have lots of ideas for school improvement. In view of pupils' achievements and personal development, their preparedness for the future is outstanding.

Leadership and management are good with excellent elements. The impact is seen in the good achievements of pupils and their outstanding personal development. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. This has resulted in a sense of common purpose across the school. Inclusion lies at the heart of the school's work and pupils have excellent chances to participate in all that the school has to offer. The governing body is very experienced and supports the school exceptionally well through its role as 'critical friend'. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses extremely well and that the majority of pupils must be challenged to raise their good achievement further in English, mathematics and science so that it matches outstanding personal development. It has firmly established itself in a relatively short period of time and demonstrates an excellent capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Good leadership and management ensures there is a clear focus on improvement, based on accurate self-evaluation and knowledge of each child's needs. Very strong links with parents ensure that children settle in quickly and start learning straight away. Children achieve well, especially in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and communication. Children learn well because they are using all their senses. In a lesson about weather, children's faces lit up as they felt a fine, misty spray of water droplets against their faces, hardly able to contain their excitement at the sensation. Personal development and well-being is outstanding. Children become aware of themselves as individuals, learn to share and take turns and respect each other's achievements and limitations. Learning opportunities are planned carefully and adapted very sensitively to children's needs. Teaching is good. Staff work together closely, ensuring that everyone receives enough support in learning and recording their observations of children's development. The indoor and outdoor environments are lively and stimulating. Children learn outdoors whenever it is safe. Their health and welfare are always given top priority and fully meets requirements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement of all pupils in English, mathematics and science to match pupils' outstanding personal development.
- Provide more consistent challenge for the most able pupils in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve equally well, regardless of their learning difficulties, ethnicity or gender. However, standards could be higher in English, mathematics and science. A high number of pupils move forward in very small steps because of the severity of their learning difficulties. Their achievements are just as good as those with other learning difficulties who might make quicker progress. Communication and language development is often a strong focus in learning and so pupils make good progress in this area. Where necessary, the spoken word is accompanied by signing, the use of symbols, pictures and aids which enable pupils to understand and be understood. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are regular features of lessons and this makes a significant contribution to the progress made by pupils in these areas. Every opportunity is taken to promote a love of books and this has resulted in good progress in reading. Work in art and design and technology is very impressive. For example, pupils' attention to scale and detail when designing and making a 'dream bedroom' was astonishing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Very impressive personal development makes an excellent contribution to learning. It is commonplace to have joint assemblies and where possible, integrated lunchtime activities with the co-located mainstream school. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, an assembly included discussion about the bitter-sweet experiences of saying goodbye to a good friend. Parents confirm that their children are managed especially well and that behaviour is outstanding. Pupils' social development is of the highest order. Pupils love acting as helpers and do splendid work in the classroom, helping adults and peers. Pupils

respect difference and value the rich diversity of their own and other cultures in the world. These factors also show the impact of the school's good work to promote community cohesion.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Strong features of teaching include the emphasis on developing communication, language, literacy and numeracy skills. Sensory learning resources are well used to support learning and the brisk pace of lessons ensures that pupils get through a lot of work. Teachers present the work in a way that captures and sustains pupils' interest. Consequently, pupils are engaged well in learning and achievement is good. Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to the success of lessons through skilful support that takes account of individual learning needs. An outstanding lesson about 'working together' included lots of opportunities for pupils to see the benefits of cooperation. Pupils smiled and laughed together as they bounced an object on a sheet they all held in a circle. Assessment and marking of work are good. The information collected about pupils' attainments is generally used well by teachers to plan future lessons. However, tasks are not always hard enough for the highest attaining pupils and their progress slows down on these occasions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

An imaginative and very enjoyable curriculum ensures that personal development is outstanding and academic achievement is good. The school's work to prepare pupils for their future economic well-being is staggering. Lots of opportunities exist to promote independence, learn about the world of work and the value of money. A regular week of enterprise activities gives pupils many rich experiences. Pupils' health and well-being is promoted very effectively through hydrotherapy, sessions in the soft play room, wheel-chair dancing and after-school sports. A good number of pupils join in lunchtime activities with the co-located school and this makes an excellent contribution to their personal development. There are many chances for pupils to take on responsibilities in school. Cultural development is enhanced through a good range of educational visits. The school's play-schemes during school holidays and on Saturday mornings are highly valued by parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils blossom as individuals because of the excellent commitment of staff who want the very best for each child. Representative views from pupils include, 'teachers are friendly, they make learning fun and make sure that we don't have any problems'. High levels of staff training in lifting, moving and personal care ensure that the dignity of pupils is always protected. Excellent links with the community include medical practitioners, therapists and advisory groups and these are very effective in promoting the well-being of pupils. Academic guidance is good. Pupils are always praised for even the smallest achievements in lessons. Celebration assemblies are frequently held and are very effective in raising pupils' self-belief and aspirations. For example, pupils glow with pride when they achieve 'super star' status. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. In this safe and very supportive environment, pupils reach challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the school is successfully focused on raising standards and achievement. Leaders at all levels play a very effective role in maintaining the highest standards of care. Self-evaluation is outstanding and matches inspection findings very closely. Senior leaders are currently further developing the leadership roles of middle managers to help raise achievement to match the outstanding personal development. For example, middle managers are increasingly involved in developing new initiatives. Improvement planning is excellent. Since the school opened, actions taken have been very well targeted and have a clear impact in bringing about sustained school improvement. The curriculum is carefully checked to ensure that it meets the needs of different groups of pupils. The school acknowledges that while procedures to check the quality of teaching across the school are effective, in a small number of lessons the most able pupils require slightly more challenge so that their progress is even better. Resources such as communication aids and computers are well used to support learning. The school is taking good actions to promote community cohesion at all levels. Parents are very appreciative of the school's work as reflected in their responses to the inspection.

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
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	4
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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	1
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	1
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 for making me so welcome when I inspected your school. I enjoyed meeting you and you were all very helpful. This letter is to tell you some of the things I found out about Newlands School. I judged that your school provides you with a good quality of education.

You told me how happy you are at school. This is because of the outstanding care and support you receive. The school provides you with lots of wonderful and exciting things to do. You know what you need to do in order to be healthy and safe. Your behaviour is excellent. The school council is super. Those of you who act as helpers and do jobs around the school do great work too.

The headteacher, staff and governors all work very hard to make sure you all keep learning well.

You have good teachers and this is why you all learn well. I have asked the school to make sure that the most able pupils do harder work so that they achieve even better. I have also asked the school to make sure that everyone's achievements in English, mathematics and science are as good as their outstanding personal development.

I know that your parents are very proud of you and you will carry on working very hard.