

# Newtown Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112218
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	337869
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gillian Salter-Smith

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Beckett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Amanda Drummond
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Newtown Road Carlisle Cumbria CA2 7LW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, and the documents looked at included the school's self evaluation form, policies relating to safeguarding, tracking of pupils' progress, the analysis of test results, and 37 parental questionnaires.

-The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- progress in mathematics and English, especially for pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils
- rates of attendance
- the consistency of teaching, especially in using data to provide appropriate challenge for all pupils
- the effectiveness of school leaders in bringing about sustained improvements
- work in community cohesion at local, national and global levels

## Information about the school

The school is much smaller than average and a well above average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. A high proportion of pupils, more than half, have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the school receives designated strategic funding to provide for up to eight pupils with severe learning difficulties. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than usual, in Reception and Year 6, is well above average. Of the small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, a few do not have English as their first language.

The school has gained the Active Mark for Sport and the local authority Silver Award for Inclusion. The school operates a breakfast club for pupils.

A Day Nursery is operated from the school site and is managed independently of the school. A separate Ofsted report is available for this facility.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Newtown Community Primary School provides an exceptionally caring and supportive environment where pupils are very happy in school, feel safe and secure and make good progress in their academic and personal development. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the highly nurturing environment created and the good teaching and support their children receive.

Pupils make good progress because staff pay very good attention to their individual personal and learning needs. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and their attainment, although low in comparison to national averages, is often better than expected in relation to their very low starting points. The very small proportion of more able pupils makes good progress and reaches challenging targets in both mathematics and English. Whilst attainment is low, achievement overall is satisfactory.

Pupils enjoy school and learning and behaviour are good. Attendance is low but improving rapidly as a result of the school's effective work, particularly that targeted towards the small number of pupils and their families who find regular attendance very difficult. Pupils enjoy making a strong contribution to life in school, for example through the school council. Although the school is a cohesive community there are few opportunities for pupils to find out about and understand people from the cultures represented in modern day British society.

The school's good capacity to improve further is demonstrated in its success in maintaining a very positive and supportive atmosphere and in bringing about significant improvements in attendance and accelerating academic progress. The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and priorities for improvement. Pupils' progress and the effectiveness of provision are monitored closely and the correct priorities are identified. The school's recent emphasis on improving the teaching and assessment of mathematics has resulted in accelerating progress. Some key leaders have not yet fully developed the monitoring and evaluation skills needed to drive through improvements more rapidly. Support staff play a key role in the high quality of care, guidance and support provided for individual pupils. Although support staff are provided with a range of professional development that supports their role well, formal arrangements for the management of their performance are not yet in place.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by:

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- developing the leadership skills of some key leaders further in order to drive improvement even more rapidly
- providing a more structured approach to the management of the performance of support staff.
- Continue to improve the rising trend in attendance by:
  - targeting efforts on an even broader range of pupils and their families when their attendance starts to slip.
- Improve the effectiveness of community cohesion by:
  - providing opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of people from a greater variety of different cultures, including those within modern day British society.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils enjoy learning and concentrate well in the classroom. They respond well to the good range of stimulating and fun activities. Key Stage 2 pupils enjoyed playing the role of persuading 'the cat stranded on a wall' (the teacher) to jump one way or the other. The scene was from a story they were studying. The pupils had clearly thought through their ideas well and used a good range of persuasive language.

Pupils enjoy writing about exciting activities. The extensive writing in one class of younger pupils reflected the way pupils' imaginations had been captured by the idea of describing a machine to do all sorts of wonderful things for you. The enjoyment and excitement observed in the well organised sessions for learning 'letters and sounds' was clear to see and contributes to pupils' self-confidence and accelerating progress in writing.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall. They receive a great deal of individual attention and support that is closely tailored to match their needs. Teachers and support staff know every child very well indeed and ensure that children are happy secure and ready to learn. Outstanding learning was observed where a group pupils, most of whom have severe learning difficulties, was totally absorbed in the practical tasks that helped them to understand the differences between different surfaces and shapes of 3 dimensional objects.

Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those in the early stages of learning English, make good progress. Pupils transferring to the school make good progress not only in their academic development but also in their personal development because they are looked after very carefully and they settle in well.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. The school council suggests many worthwhile improvements to life for pupils in school and in the community, for example the improved arrangements for lunchtime and playtime. A group of pupils is very busy organising a school newspaper. Pupils enjoy taking part in events at the local church where they meet with people from across the local community. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy with a good proportion of pupils taking part in

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additional sporting activities out of school hours.

Pupils develop good levels of self-confidence which is evident when pupils present their work and achievements formally to parents each half term. Their confidence and social skills were evident when pupils presented their suggestions for improvements to a local park to the Neighbourhood Forum. Pupils are developing good social skills. In classrooms they enjoy working cooperatively in pairs and groups and they get on with tasks independently. Older pupils are using the school's internet 'learning platform' enthusiastically to carry out homework tasks. Their enterprise skills are developing through activities they plan and undertake to raise funds for charities and to support residential visits.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is good and there is some that is outstanding, particularly in supporting the learning of those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Constructive and supportive relationships between staff and pupils and clear classroom routines mean that pupils feel very secure in classrooms and are usually very willing to contribute their

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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ideas to lessons. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects and use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to stimulate and support learning. A good pace to learning and good questioning that encourages pupils to think things out for themselves support good progress. Assessment is used well to match tasks to different pupils' needs and ensure that all pupils are challenged in lessons and make good progress. Pupils find their individual targets for literacy and numeracy very helpful in helping them to concentrate on how to improve their work. Teachers' marking and guidance to individuals gives pupils a clear understanding of how to improve. It is not always clear how pupils are expected to respond to teachers' comments on their work.

The curriculum meets individual needs very well. An increased emphasis on using direct first hand experiences, exciting visits and stimulating visitors, plenty of talk and role play is leading to pupils' increased enjoyment of their work and their improved progress in writing skills especially. The programme to develop understanding of letters, sounds and spelling for all pupils is resulting in improved progress in writing. The programme of social, personal and emotional development is very well planned. All pupils benefit from time spent in the special room known as 'Oasis' where pupils learn how to relax and understand and control their emotions. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a varied programme of extra-curricular activities in sport, music and other enjoyable activities.

The school works tirelessly to ensure that individual pupils and their families are exceptionally well supported. Outstanding liaison with external agencies ensures that pupils' needs are fully met. The work of the school in conjunction with other agencies has led to rapid improvement in rates of attendance. The very close attention paid to helping pupils to manage their own behaviour, particularly through the outstanding work in the 'Oasis' room, a room where pupils are taught to relax and cope with their emotional difficulties, is a real strength of the school. Pupils appreciate the morning breakfast club where they are settled and well cared for before the start of the school day. Pupils visit the secondary schools and good liaison between staff helps pupils to be well prepared for their move to the next stage in their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders are clearly focused on and succeed in providing a safe and secure environment where every pupil's progress and well-being is closely monitored. The school's specific

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aim to meet each and every pupil's individual needs is shared and met by all staff. Close monitoring of pupils' progress leads to accurate identification of areas that are in need of improvement. Well devised action plans and relevant professional development, well supported by the local authority, are helping to drive improvement.

Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Procedures for child protection and risk assessment are rigorous and effective. Equality of opportunity is promoted well with every single child's needs being carefully considered and acted upon.

Governors are well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors bring a good range of experience and expertise and hold the school to account well, acting as critical friends effectively. A number of governors are new to the role and have not yet received sufficient training. Governors are not fully aware of the full breadth of their statutory obligations.

Pupils mix well with different groups within the local community, particularly through events organised with the church. The curriculum provides pupils with an understanding of cultures in the wider global community. There is limited opportunity for pupils to communicate with and develop an understanding of cultures within the diversity of British society. The impact of community cohesion is not yet fully evaluated.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children enter Nursery with very low skills and development, especially in communication and language skills and personal, social and emotional development.



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The good work that staff carry out with parents and families to help prepare children for school helps them to settle in quickly and become familiar with the routines of daily life in the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit. Children enjoy playing and learning in a safe environment. They get on well with each other and show consideration and kindness towards one another. Teachers plan a good range of activities with an appropriate emphasis on enabling children to develop their own interests. Adults are alert to children's desires and motivations and steer and plan future learning and play accordingly. Adults communicate well with children, prompting talk through the use of many open questions. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children. Learning and play is planned for both indoors and outdoors across all areas of learning. However, the restrictions of the outdoor learning environment limit opportunities for play and learning whilst outdoors. Adults assess children continually and adjust learning accordingly to ensure that all children, including the few more able children, are challenged. From very low starting points, children make good progress but the proportion of children reaching the levels expected for their age is well below average. Staff are vigilant in ensuring children are safe and secure and key workers play a vital role in this. Leaders set high expectations of staff, carry out rigorous self-evaluation and ensure that the right priorities for improvement are acted upon.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

An average proportion of parents responded. The vast majority are supportive of the school and appreciate the good quality of care and support their children receive. Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are especially appreciative.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newtown Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 94 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	76	8	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	65	12	32	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	65	12	32	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	68	10	27	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	62	14	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	57	15	41	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	57	14	38	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	41	17	46	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	54	16	43	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	59	11	30	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	62	13	35	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	54	17	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	65	12	32	1	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



11 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newtown Community Primary School, Carlisle, CA2 7LW

Many thanks for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and out on the playground. It is important that you know what we are reporting to your parents about your school.

Your school provides a satisfactory standard of education. You make good progress and enjoy learning because you are well taught. You are happy in school and feel safe and secure because the school provides a high quality of care and support. You behave well and show a commitment to improving your own school through the work of the school council. You are developing self-confidence and the ability to work with others. You are enjoying the school's emphasis on using role play, drama and talk to help improve your literacy skills.

There are few things we have asked your school to do to help you reach higher levels of attainment in English and mathematics especially. These include:

- working with more of you and your families to improve attendance
- helping the staff that are leaders to make sure improvements are brought about as quickly as possible
- making sure that all staff who are not teachers get the support they need to help you even more
- ensuring that you are helped to become aware of and understand the different cultures that make up modern day British society.

You can play your part by coming to school every day that you possibly can, enjoying the activities and doing your best.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Gillian Salter-Smith

Lead Inspector

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