

Newton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112507
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337950
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Day
Headteacher	Tim Clarke (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	0 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, including a sample of pupils' books, teachers' planning documents, tracking and assessment data, and analysed questionnaires from 13 parents, 50 pupils and five staff.

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

- the quality of teaching and provision in Key Stage 2
- the quality of the school's assessment and tracking systems
- pupils' behaviour in and around the school
- provision for information and communication technology (ICT).

Information about the school

This is a small school serving a former mining village, with mainly White British pupils. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is below average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils on the school roll has reduced dramatically since the last inspection. The school has had considerable staff turbulence since the last inspection, with some very recent changes, and is currently being led by an acting headteacher. An independently managed pre-school breakfast club, a Nursery and an after-school play centre are provided on the school site. This organisation was the subject of a separate inspection and the report will be available on the Ofsted website. The school has gained the Basic Skills Award, the ECO Schools Silver Award and the Health-Promoting Schools' Award.

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

3

Main findings

Newton Primary has been through a difficult period since the last inspection but is now getting back on track and improving due to the leadership of the acting headteacher. In a very short time, with the strong support of the local authority, he has effectively resolved the main issue for the school by strengthening the quality of teaching in the upper school and setting clear and appropriate priorities for further improvement. Parents are supportive of the school's work, but a few have expressed concerns about the recent changes in leadership and staffing and its effect on the progress their children are making. However one parent, reflecting on this concern, wrote: 'I now feel the school is much improved and is getting better by the day.'

Children get off to a good start and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. Standards in the latest national tests in 2009 were above the national average at the end of Year 2 but in line with national averages in Year 6. This reflects slower progress in Key Stage 2 which is a result of prolonged instability in teaching in the two classes. Parents say their children enjoy coming to school and pupils agree enthusiastically, although attendance is only satisfactory. Pupils have well-developed personal skills. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe. A strong moral code is implicit within the school's ethos. This is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and, in turn, has a positive effect on the good progress pupils make in lessons.

The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced although information and communication technology is not used well enough to support work in other subjects. Pupils receive a good variety of exciting activities and experiences through visits, residential stays and visitors to school and pupils particularly enjoy the good range of after school activities and clubs, including physical activities. Support for vulnerable pupils is an established part of the school's provision and plays a useful role in fostering their personal development. Academic guidance is good in the lower school but weaker in the upper school where accurate data are currently not available due to the lack of a rigorous and accurate whole-school assessment and tracking system. Despite the temporary nature of the current leadership, its positive impact on improving teaching quality and outcomes for pupils, and the continuing support of the governing body and local authority, demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to maintain and sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the early identification of groups or individuals requiring further support or

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challenge by developing a rigorous whole-school assessment and tracking system.

- Improve the curriculum by ensuring more cross-curricular use of the school's information and communication technology resources.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, although there are variations from year to year due to the small cohorts, standards are generally below those typically found, particularly in communication skills, social skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make good and, in some cases, very good progress in the Reception Year and this good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. Due to prolonged staff absences and previous wide variations in the quality of teaching in the two Key Stage 2 classes, this good progress has not been continued through the school and standards in the last national tests were in line with national averages. This constitutes only satisfactory progress overall. In most cases pupils work hard and conscientiously, without the need for constant adult intervention, both independently and co-operatively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities show interest in their work and, with effective support, are making progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities.

Observations during lessons, in assemblies and around the school confirm that pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils show considerable respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. They have good attitudes to learning and develop considerate relationships with peers and adults. They understand the need for healthy lifestyles and the need for exercise and participate regularly in activities which enable them to do so. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to contribute to school and local communities through the work of the school council and other bodies such as the Eco Council and by making collections for a number of charities. They value their school community and participate constructively in school life. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school but this is not yet reflected in high levels of attendance. Although the school has satisfactory systems in place to monitor and improve attendance, including a weekly attendance cup awarded to the class with the best record, these are not yet fully effective and the poor attendance of a small but persistent minority of pupils continues to give cause for concern. By the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment levels, their good behaviour and good personal and social skills prepare them satisfactorily for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching has improved significantly since the acting headteacher took over and, with the strong support of the local authority, new teachers were employed to teach Key Stage 2 pupils. However, analysis of work in pupils' books confirms that pupils have been making only broadly satisfactory progress until very recently. The new team of teachers have good subject knowledge and pupils' learning and progress are now improving. They ensure classroom routines are made clear and regularly reinforced so that learning takes place in a well-structured environment and all pupils can contribute to lessons. Learning intentions are made clear at the beginning of each lesson and, as a result, pupils know precisely what it is that they are expected to do. Teachers are well supported by effective and skilled teaching assistants who provide effective support for groups of pupils with whom they are directed to work. Day to day assessment is good. However, as a result of ineffective and inaccurate whole school assessment and tracking procedures in the past, teachers new to the school are not always able to plan effectively to provide a range of work well matched to the different ages and abilities in each mixed-age class. The curriculum is broad and balanced although there is limited use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular experiences through regular educational visits and visitors to school and bi-annual residential trips. The extensive range of lunchtime and after-school clubs are attended well and enjoyed enthusiastically by pupils. The school has satisfactory arrangements for the care of all pupils which contribute to their development and well-being and support their learning effectively.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has quickly identified and is beginning to tackle areas requiring improvement with rigour. Most importantly, on arrival, he acted promptly and successfully to secure improved teaching in Key Stage 2. The next stage, which is already underway, is to secure long-term quality in staffing and to develop a rigorous whole-school assessment and tracking system so that teacher's planning can be founded on robust evidence and based on good quality data. Governors fulfil their statutory duties, are supportive and challenge the school to do well. Systems to ensure that pupils and staff are safe and discharge their duties effectively are secure. Although parents have understandably been concerned about the recent significant changes in personnel and its effect on their children's progress, the school has a positive relationship with most groups of parents and carers. The school promotes equal opportunity in all its work although it is aware that, until recently, the quality of provision across the school has varied considerably. It adopts recommended good practice for safeguarding pupils across all areas of its work and quality assurance and risk assessment systems take due account of pupils' and parents' views. The school identifies dangers, fosters a realistic understanding of risk and helps pupils to keep themselves safe. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Although it has good links with the local community provision to promote pupils' understanding of the wider national and global dimensions is not sufficiently developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for the youngest children is good. Children enter the Reception Class in two phases during the year with skills that are generally below those typically found. At the time of inspection, there were only three Reception children in the Autumn term cohort. They clearly enjoy school and have settled into the routines well and play happily together and individually with each other and with Year 1 and 2 children in the same class. They undertake a variety of whole class and group activities and co-operate well when working with others. They delight in learning and seeing new things. There are good relationships with parents and carers through daily contact at the start and end of each day. Pastoral care and welfare arrangements are effective. Consequently, children are safe, well cared for and aware of how to be healthy. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly, are well-supported and are integrated well into all activities. Provision for the outdoor curriculum is good. The Early Years Foundation Stage classroom has free access to a large and secure outdoor area with a range of free-choice and adult-led activities. This allows children to explore things with purpose and challenge and encourages the development of their independent learning skills. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Adults have a good knowledge of the learning' development and welfare requirements and guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are good systems for the long-term assessment and tracking of children's progress. Staff monitor and record children's progress on a day to day basis effectively and observations and achievements are recorded in individual 'Pupil Profiles'.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

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The great majority of parents responding to the questionnaire had positive views of most aspects of the school's work. However, a few parents expressed concerns about the negative effects of prolonged staff absences and changes in leadership on their child's progress. The inspection team understands these historic concerns and feels they were justified but believes that initiatives introduced by the current leadership with the strong support of the local authority have resolved most of these issues.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newton 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 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 72 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	3	23	9	69	1	8	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	2	15	5	38	4	31	1	8
My child is making enough progress at this school	4	31	7	54	1	8	1	8
The teaching is good at this school	3	23	5	38	1	8	1	8
The school helps me to support my child's learning	2	15	5	38	3	23	2	15
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	2	15	8	62	2	15	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)	1	8	6	46	1	8	2	15
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	15	9	69	1	8	1	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	15	6	46	0	0	3	23
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	2	15	7	54	1	8	3	23
The school is led and managed effectively	3	23	2	15	2	15	4	31
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	2	15	6	46	2	15	2	15

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



7 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newton Primary School, Alfreton DE55 5TL

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I very much enjoyed our visit. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to some of you. You attend a happy and friendly school where your teachers care for you and support you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They make sure that you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe and you do this well. You told us that you really like your school and there are lots of things to do and enjoy. We agree with you. Your behaviour is good. You work hard and try to succeed in all that you do.

We have asked your school to do a few things to make it even better:

Make better use of what it finds out about your progress so that if you need extra help it can be provided more quickly.

Give you more opportunities to use computers in all the subjects that you learn.

I wish you well in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis

Lead inspector

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