

Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119805
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339536
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Jean Kendall HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Darren Clayton
Headteacher	Mr James Bird
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
School address	School Lane Newton-With-Scales Preston PR4 3RT
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and a local authority representative. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement planning and pupils' progress tracking, internal and external monitoring, policies and safeguarding procedures. Inspectors also took account of the 89 questionnaire returns from parents, two returns from staff and 107 returns from pupils.

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

- how well pupils of all abilities, particularly the more-able, make progress in their learning
- how well teaching meets the needs of all pupils, promotes their progress and sustains their interest and motivation
- pupils' personal development and behaviour
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the extent to which children make progress from their starting points
- how effectively leaders and managers monitor and evaluate provision to promote improvement since the last inspection, and the school's capacity to sustain further improvement.

Information about the school

Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School is an average sized school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school supports a privately run breakfast and after school club which was inspected in June 2009. The school has the Activemark Award, 'Healthy Schools' status and Green Flag Eco School status. It has strong links with the church. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a part-time Nursery class and a Reception class.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the quality of pupils' learning and their progress, the quality of teaching and the use of assessment.

There are weaknesses in provision which prevent pupils doing as well as they might in key aspects of their learning. Although most pupils reach average standards in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, many do not achieve as well as they should given their starting points and their previously high attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. This is because teaching is not consistently well matched to pupils' needs and their progress slows in lower Key Stage 2. Although there are good examples of teaching and assessment which provide models of effective practice, teaching is inadequate overall. Pupils spend too much time working on activities that do not further their knowledge, understanding and skills and fail to engage their full interest in some classes. Teachers' use of assessment to inform lesson planning and to measure pupils' understanding is of variable quality. Pupils are not always clear of the purpose of activities or of how they can improve their work.

There are, however, aspects of the school's provision that are good and these enable pupils to develop good social and personal skills. The school's caring ethos means that pupils feel valued as individuals and grow in confidence. Pupils are considerate toward one another and make a good contribution to their school which is a harmonious and supportive community. There is a tangible pride within the school, shared by staff and pupils. School leaders and governors are working with the local authority to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to raise pupils' achievement. Systems to track pupils' progress, monitor teachers' performance and to set targets for improvement have been put in place. However, monitoring is not sufficiently focused on identifying the aspects of teaching that need to improve or the actions that will raise pupils' achievement. The headteacher and governors are fully committed to bringing about improvements and have a clear understanding of what needs to be done. Where the whole school has worked together, for example, to raise standards in mathematics, there is evidence of improvement. The school has the capacity to bring about and sustain further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring planning takes account of pupils' prior learning and activities are well matched to their needs, interests and abilities
 - ensuring that time is used effectively and all activities and lessons extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills
 - ensuring that pupils understand what they are learning and how they can improve their own work
 - using regularly moderated teachers' assessments of classwork to plan appropriately challenging work, including for the more-able
 - planning high quality intervention to support pupils quickly when they are not making expected progress.
- Strengthen arrangements for monitoring the progress of pupils and ensure that teaching and planning across the curriculum are challenged rigorously when they fail to have the expected impact.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils are receptive to learning; they have high aspirations and want to do well. Their enthusiasm is reflected in their excellent attendance and full participation in extra-curricular and enrichment activities including sporting, artistic and cultural experiences. Pupils recognise right and wrong and almost always make positive decisions. They reflect well on their own beliefs and show respect for the feelings and values of others. Although they have had limited opportunities to engage widely with pupils of other ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds to themselves, they talk with respect, curiosity and interest about similarities and differences found in our diverse society.

Pupils enjoy lessons and concentrate well where they acquire new knowledge and skills and are challenged to solve problems, think creatively and apply their knowledge. However, they become restless and distracted in lessons that do not motivate them because activities are boring and do not extend their learning. Even then, they are responsive to teachers' guidance and quickly amend their behaviour. Pupils' behaviour around the school is consistently good. Their consideration and support for each other is exemplary. Many pupils hold positions of responsibility and become effective ambassadors for the school as they get older. They interact with the wider community through a range of clubs such as choir, cookery, mechanics and sporting events and they have a key role in coordinating the school's support for charities.

Pupils' positive attitudes help them to develop good personal skills and make a good contribution to their school. However, their progress in other aspects of learning is uneven across the school. Pupils begin the national curriculum in Year 1 with attainment that is mostly above average. They make satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1 to attain standards that are above average at the end of Year 2. However, this level of progress is not sustained. Whilst the majority of pupils attain average standards in the

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end of Key Stage 2 tests in English, mathematics and science, their performance at the higher Level 5 is lower than expected given their prior attainment. Pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities make better progress than their classmates because they receive good quality support.

Pupils who spoke to inspectors and those who returned questionnaires said that they feel safe, secure and well cared for in school. They have a good knowledge of how to keep safe, for example, when crossing roads, near water or using the internet. Pupils know how to keep healthy and understand the dangers of poor diet, smoking and substance abuse. They enjoy the many opportunities they have to participate in physical activity and competitive sport and are proud of the many trophies and awards which adorn the school. Although pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in some aspects of learning, effective support in Years 5 and 6 ensures that they have secure basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. These, together with their well developed personal and social skills, equip them well to succeed in the next phase of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

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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The quality of teaching is variable across the school and there is too little that is good. Consequently, many pupils make insufficient progress in key aspects of their learning. Some lessons are taught effectively, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where pupils make faster progress. Where teaching is at its best, teachers appropriately assess pupils' understanding and plan lessons effectively. They provide pupils with interesting and challenging activities that take account of their prior learning and that are well matched to their ability. In such lessons, pupils work with a high degree of independence; they enjoy the challenge and take a real pride in their work and their accomplishments. Weaker lessons do not secure sufficient progress in learning because the intended learning outcomes and the purpose of tasks are unclear. Information about what pupils already know, can do or understand is not used to guide lesson planning. Encouraging relationships are a significant strength in the vast majority of lessons and this helps pupils develop good personal and social skills.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development but has shortcomings in meeting the needs of more-able pupils. This is because too much time is wasted in sessions that are unplanned, with activities that occupy pupils, but do not further their learning or fully engage their interest. Pupils' personal development is promoted well through a range of activities where pupils can take responsibility, develop compassion and empathy and think about their place in society.

The good quality of care, guidance and support is a significant factor in securing good outcomes in aspects of pupils' personal development. Pupils and parents are positive about the guidance and support pupils receive. The school's focus on pupils' personal development and well-being helps them to grow in confidence and develop as healthy and socially adept individuals. Parents feel that induction arrangements for children entering the school are effective. They report that pupils transfer successfully to secondary school and settle quickly.

Provision to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who have fallen behind in their learning is satisfactory. The most effective provision is in upper Key Stage 2 where pupils start to close the gap on previous underachievement as a result of effective support tailored to their individual needs.

Pupils identified as being gifted and talented enjoy the opportunity to develop specific interests through the wide range of activities on offer to all and in activities organised specifically for them, such as special days at the secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and governors are ambitious for pupils and are fully committed to bringing about improvements. However, they have not been successful in driving the improvement necessary to raise pupils' achievement and secure good quality teaching across the whole school. An improvement issue from the last inspection relating to the provision of challenging work for all pupils so that they achieve according to their capabilities, has not been resolved. The deployment of resources to achieve value for money is inadequate because too many pupils have been underachieving for too long. There are strategies in place to raise teachers' expectations and pupils' achievement, but they are not yet showing impact. Governors have a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and are providing satisfactory challenge and support to bring about necessary improvements.

The school has robust procedures that ensure pupils are safe, well cared for, happy and secure. Appropriate checks are carried out on staff and visitors, and staff and nominated governors are trained in safeguarding and child protection procedures, both of which meet requirements. The school is active and well respected within the local community. It has close links with the church and community groups and hosts a number of popular events for local residents. Provision for pupils is greatly enhanced by the school's sports partnerships and its work with the local engineering college and high schools. The school actively seeks to introduce role models from different backgrounds, which helps pupils gain a good understanding of diversity in British society. There have been no reported incidents of racism in several years. Effective policies and monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure equality of opportunity for pupils and support those in need. All pupils feel valued and confident to contribute their views and opinions and take part in the full range of activities and opportunities offered by the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4
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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with knowledge and skills that are mostly in line with or above those expected for their age. Close partnerships with parents and good induction procedures help children to feel safe and secure and help parents support them effectively. Children settle quickly because adults provide a caring and supportive environment. All welfare and safeguarding requirements are fully met. Children play happily together and develop good personal and social skills. Their behaviour is consistently good and they cooperate well together. They make satisfactory progress in other areas of their learning so that by the time they begin Year 1 the majority are working at above average levels and they are well prepared to begin the national curriculum.

Teachers and teaching assistants in the Nursery and Reception classes have worked well together to establish purposeful learning opportunities in all areas of learning in both the indoor and outdoor environment. Assessment is used effectively to record children's understanding but it is not always used to plan sufficiently challenging activities to extend learning in all areas. Teachers are aware of the need to develop the role of the adult in assessing and extending children's learning in activities provided in order to help children learn independently.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents who returned questionnaires say that they are happy with the quality of education and care their children receive. They feel that their children enjoy school, stating, for example, that 'the school is a friendly place and provides a wonderful caring environment'. Inspectors also found this to be the case. Parents are particularly pleased with provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Some parents who returned questionnaires raised concerns about the progress their children make when they transfer in to Key Stage 2 and the quality of teaching in some classes and these are concerns shared by inspectors. Parents, like inspectors, have confidence in the school's leaders to bring about improvements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newton Bluecoat Church of England 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 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	66	30	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	61	34	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	42	45	51	6	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	49	35	40	7	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	36	41	43	49	7	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	51	36	41	5	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	49	42	48	2	2	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)	38	43	41	47	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	45	39	44	5	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	34	45	51	6	7	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	33	44	50	8	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	48	34	39	4	5	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	56	33	38	5	6	1	1

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.



5 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School, Preston, PR4 3RT

Thank you for making inspectors so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking with you and observing your work. We found that Newton Bluecoat has many strengths including:

- the caring and friendly environment that helps you grow in confidence and develop good social and personal skills
- the school's promotion of your health, safety and well-being
- your excellent attendance and enthusiastic participation in all the school offers
- your good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning
- the way in which you take responsibility to ensure your school is a happy and harmonious community.

You can be proud of your contribution to the school. We know that teachers and the school's leaders want you to achieve to the best of your ability. However, we found that many of you are not achieving as well as you might because the quality of some teaching is not as good as it could be. For this reason we have given your school a notice to improve.

We have asked teachers to improve the quality of teaching and raise your achievement by:

- ensuring that all activities and lessons take account things that you have already learned, your needs, interests and abilities
- ensuring that you understand what you are learning about and how you can improve your work
- providing you with really good, quick support if you are not making expected progress.

We have asked school leaders to:

- check much more often on how well you are getting on with your work.

We know that the school will be able to make these improvements. We think you are well placed to achieve your own goals and ambitions and wish you every success.

Yours sincerely,

Jean Kendall HMI

on behalf of the inspection team

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