

Newnham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121848
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	340026
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claudia Wade
Headteacher	John Lawson
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, which included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's improvement plan and also pupils' work. In addition, the responses of 28 parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account.

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

- the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6 and whether current Year 6 pupils are on track to meet their targets
- the key features of teaching that have improved since the previous inspection
- whether the quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding
- how well teachers with responsibilities support the school's monitoring and evaluation processes.

Information about the school

Newnham is a small school that serves the village and surrounding area. All the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about half the national average. The school has a breakfast and after-school club that is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection report. The school has a new headteacher who has been in post since June 2008. Children in the Reception year are taught in a single class. The remaining classes contain pupils from two year groups.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Newnham is a good and rapidly improving school. There is an overwhelming ethos of care and support that enables the pupils to thrive in both their academic and personal development. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils' highly positive attitudes play an important part in their progress. The vast majority of parents and carers that responded to the inspection questionnaire said that they are happy with their children's experience at the school. Pupils feel very safe and secure. Much of this is due to the way in which all the adults care and support each child. This extends, in particular, to those pupils that have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are successfully included in all the school has to offer and they make good progress towards their individual targets.

There have been across-the-board improvements since the last inspection that have led to an acceleration in pupils' progress, strengthening achievement and improving standards. This is due to the excellence of the leadership of the new headteacher who, working in close partnership with governors, has galvanised the staff into an effective team who share his commitment to strengthen provision and drive up standards. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and provides an effective framework for school improvement. Challenging targets are set to provide a spur for further improvement. The school's track record in improving provision and accelerating learning shows the school's good capacity to improve further.

In the past, there has been some underachievement, particularly in Years 3 and 4. However, this has been tackled vigorously and all groups of pupils in all year groups are making good progress. Standards in the school now are significantly above average. Inspection findings and the school's own tracking data show that current Year 6 pupils are on course to improve on the hitherto trend of above-average attainment by the end of Year 6.

The key to the improvement in standards has been improvements in teaching from previously satisfactory levels. This is aided by revised and good quality arrangements to track pupils' progress and improvements in the accuracy of teachers' assessments. As a result, teachers ensure that lessons are pitched at the right level of difficulty for different groups of pupils. There has been a successful focus on strengthening learning by actively involving pupils in lessons. This has helped the pupils to become more engaged in their learning and also more independent. In all lessons, for example, teachers make clear the objectives and this helps the pupils to know what is to be learned. However, as yet, there is some inconsistency in the way in which teachers make use of success criteria in lessons. Although in some lessons teachers refer to the identified success criteria, this is not always the case. Furthermore, teachers' marking,

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although thorough and supportive, does not refer to the stated success criteria often enough and this occasionally leads to pupils being unclear about what they have to do to succeed. Nonetheless, almost all lessons are of good quality with pupils enjoying learning and the interesting tasks that teachers set.

There has been a successful revision of the literacy and numeracy curriculum and also a strengthening of the curriculum for information and communication technology (ICT). This has resulted in the development of an effective and systematic programme of learning in these areas. Pupils enjoy their lessons and there is a good range of opportunities for them to develop and pursue their interests. However, links between subjects to ensure greater relevance are at an early stage of development, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This results in too few opportunities being provided for pupils to use and, consequently, develop further their skills in writing, numeracy and ICT in different subjects.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help pupils to develop a clearer understanding of what is expected of them in lessons by:
 - consistently ensuring that they know exactly what is needed to produce work of a high standard.
 - ensure that teachers' marking of work provides details of the extent to which pupils have met the lesson's success criteria.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to apply literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum by providing more links between subjects to make learning more meaningful.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils enjoy learning and school. They respond enthusiastically to the good teaching. Pupils co-operate well together, participate keenly in class discussion and settle quickly to work independently and in groups.

Pupils' progress has accelerated since the previous inspection. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is now exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. Previously attainment has been above average. The strong learning focus, complemented by sharp and good quality teaching with an improved, higher level of challenge in lessons, has led to the raising of attainment from previously above-average levels. A legacy of under achievement in Years 3 and 4 has meant that results at the end of Year 6 have not shown such a strong improvement. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have tended to be above average. However, pupils' progress is now strong in Years 3 to 6, as well as in the infant class, and standards are rising. Inspection findings confirm the school's data that some of the Year 5 pupils are already reaching the attainment expected for pupils at the end of Year 6, particularly in reading and writing. Attainment in the current Year 6 is significantly above average and poised to be even higher by the

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end of Year 6.

Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and they have an excellent understanding of the importance of being physically active and a healthy diet. Excellent attention is paid to the pupils' personal development and well-being. This produces Year 6 pupils who are reflective, mature and responsible, and who are prepared well for the next stage of their education. Pupils particularly relish the excellent range of opportunities for them to take responsibility. This includes being part of the influential school council, being buddies or operating one of the many lunchtime clubs that the pupils run for themselves. In addition, they are proud of the fair, which all pupils organised for themselves, which raised $\pounds 73$ from goods that they made in a design and technology lesson.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

All classrooms have a calm and purposeful atmosphere as pupils work enthusiastically. Relationships between adults and pupils are outstanding. Teaching is consistently good with teachers generally ensuring that work is challenging with high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Individual pupils' progress is monitored very carefully and the

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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termly pupil progress meetings provide a good means of reviewing each child's progress. Interactive whiteboards are available for teachers to enliven learning. The whiteboards are not always used as well as they might be, except in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Here the teacher is very skilled in its use, making a very strong contribution to the pace of learning in this class. Teaching assistants work skilfully to support all pupils, particularly those that have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and they make a strong contribution to their learning.

Much work has been done to refine and hone the curriculum for literacy and numeracy. In addition, the adoption of a new ICT curriculum has ensured that work in this subject is now appropriately challenging for all ages of pupils as they move through the school. However, work to personalise the curriculum in other subjects is at an early stage, though a promising new approach is being trialled in the class for pupils in Years 1 and 2. There are good plans in place to extend this to the other two classes. There is a good and broad range of extra-curricular activities and the curriculum is satisfactorily enhanced by visits out of school and with a small range of visitors to the school.

The excellence of the school's care, guidance and support is instrumental in ensuring that pupils thrive in their personal development and is a fundamental building block for the improvements in the provision for pupils and their achievement. The school benefits enormously from its strong sense of community. Each child feels valued and is treated as an individual.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has energised the school. He has brought rigour, structure and ambition to the school's leadership. His management of change is of high quality. It is based on a clear vision for improvement that is shared by staff and governors. The impact of this is seen in the improving picture of attainment and progress throughout the school. There is close monitoring of provision and the ensuing analysis underpins the school's work to promote equality and to tackle any potential discrimination. Led by a knowledgeable and skilful chair, governance has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Governors hold the school to account well. They review policies and procedures on a regular basis and they offer support and challenge in equal measures. There are robust and good-quality safeguarding procedures in place. The school has safe recruitment practices and child protection training is rigorous and up to date.

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The school's effective promotion of community cohesion is based on a good analysis of the context of the school's work. There are close links with the local community. For example, villagers use the school for delivering their Christmas cards: over 1,000 are received and distributed. There are strong links with the church and the parish council. Links are being established with an inner-city school and visits between the schools are planned. These links are helping pupils to understand and appreciate cultures and beliefs that are different to their own. Work to promote understanding of the global dimension of community cohesion is less secure, though pupils have compared their lives to the lives of children in Malawi and the school is developing links with a school in Ghana.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills which are broadly in line with the levels expected for their age, although their social and communication skills are better than is usual for their age. They quickly settle into school as a result of good induction arrangements. Children progress well in the highly supportive atmosphere and they benefit from skilled teaching. Children with particular needs are supported well and they enjoy school and learning, and progress well. The curriculum is broad and rich and provides a good range of opportunities that stimulate interest and excitement in the children. For example, they thoroughly enjoyed searching outside for the carrots for Santa's reindeer, whilst others made up the necessary 12 bags of oats; 'One for each reindeer and two for Rudolph', said one excited boy! There is a good balance provided between activities that the children choose for themselves

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and those that are directed by the staff. The teaching of letters and sounds is of particularly high quality and makes a strong contribution to the children's high attainment in reading and writing. Activities are well managed, both indoors and outdoors, although the range of resources available, particularly outdoors, is not as broad as it could be. Provision is carefully tailored to meet each child's needs. All are included and thorough ongoing assessments ensure that work is adapted and planned well to meet their needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led, with a strong focus on helping all children to do well. The good provision results in almost all the children attaining the expected goals at the end of the Reception year with a minority considerably exceeding them.

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

Responses were received from almost a half of the families. Those responding were overwhelmingly positive about the school and were unanimous in their agreement to some of the statements in the questionnaire. Inspection findings confirm these positive views. Parental and carer comments commended the safe and welcoming environment, and the work of the headteacher and the staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newnham 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 inspector received 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 91 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	89	2	7	1	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	39	16	57	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	50	11	39	2	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	64	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	54	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	54	11	39	0	0	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)	12	43	12	43	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	57	10	36	2	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	75	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	50	11	39	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	61	8	29	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	61	10	36	1	4	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">■ 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 pupils' 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.



10 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newnham Primary School, Northamptonshire, NN11 3HG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school. I hope that you all thoroughly enjoyed going to the pantomime in Northampton to see 'Honk'. I am sorry that I had to ask your headteacher to stay behind to help me with the inspection! I am pleased to tell you that you go to a good school. These are some of the things that really stood out.

Your behaviour is excellent and you all work so well together.

You make good progress in your learning.

You enjoy your learning and the fun activities your teachers plan for you.

The way that the staff support you and look after you is excellent.

Your headteacher is doing an excellent job: together with the staff he makes sure that your school runs smoothly and well.

You have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and how to stay safe.

You enjoy taking responsibility such as by organising clubs for other children and your school fair to raise money.

Even in such a good school as yours, there are things which could be improved. I have asked your teachers to make sure that they always make success criteria clear in lessons and check these during the lesson. Also, I have asked them to make some comments about how well you have met the success criteria when they mark your work. I have also asked for your teachers to give you more opportunities to apply your literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in the topics that you are learning.

I hope that you continue to enjoy all the things that your school offers to you.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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