

Newbrough Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122298
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	340118
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Myers
Headteacher	Miss Kathleen Halliday
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Fourstones Hexham Northumberland NE47 5AQ
Telephone number	01434 674284
Fax number	01434 674284
Email address	kathleen.halliday@northumberland.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, observed four teachers and a visiting specialist music teacher. They held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's tracking data, pupils' work in books, the school improvement plan and documentation relating to the school's safeguarding procedures. Parents' views, as expressed in 58 questionnaires, were also considered.

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

- how well all pupils make progress from their starting points in the Nursery
- the extent to which teachers' use of assessment information supports pupils' learning
- the impact of recent changes to the curriculum through the school's partnership with neighbouring schools
- the impact of new leadership on school development.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. All pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has fewer pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or with a statement of special educational needs than is usual. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start in Nursery in the term after their third birthday and remain in the Early Years Foundation Stage till the end of the Reception class. The school holds a number of awards including the Healthy School Award and the Artsmark. The school is member of the West Tyne Church Federation, which includes five other schools. A new headteacher took up post 18 months ago.

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

This is a good school which has some outstanding features. It ensures that pupils make good overall progress from the time they start in Nursery until they leave in Year 4. The vast majority of pupils reach the level expected for their age by the end of Year 4, and each year a good proportion exceeds this level. Results in national assessments since the last inspection show that at the end of Year 2, pupils' performance is above the national average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good and sometimes excellent progress. They get off to a very good start in their learning because the provision here is outstanding.

Pupils are happy in school, as their good attendance testifies. They enjoy learning and are caring and supportive of each other. Although the vast majority behave well, there is a very small minority of pupils whose behaviour sometimes slows the learning of others when it is not well managed. Pupils feel safe in school because they have been taught well to assess risks to their well-being and they know that adults will respond promptly to their concerns. They enjoy a good curriculum which is developing well through excellent partnerships with other schools, to give pupils plenty of opportunities for independent work and collaboration. All of these things contribute to preparing pupils well for the next stage of learning.

Teachers provide a good range of practical activities which stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and make them want to learn. They expect pupils to work hard and they do. While assessment procedures are satisfactory, teachers' use of assessment information does not contribute enough to planning the next steps in learning for all pupils, especially the more able. Marking and feedback are regular but a weakness is in written feedback, which does not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve. Pupils are well cared for and supported in school. Staff are vigilant and raise concerns whenever they see changes in a pupil's mood or performance. A strength of the provision is the way the school responds promptly to pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities by enlisting the support of external agencies.

Leadership and management are good in identifying areas for improvement and in working collaboratively to bring about improvement in this small school. Good teamwork between staff, and staff and governors, is helping the school to increase the pace of progress as each group becomes more expert and confident. Morale is good and staff feel valued for the contribution they make to school improvement. Governors ensure that the school exceeds the requirements for safeguarding and that aspects of the school's practice are excellent. The school has demonstrated a good capacity for improvement since the last inspection: above average standards have been maintained; the environment, especially outdoors, has improved; and the curriculum is developing

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well. The school knows itself well. In view of this, the school is well placed for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teachers' use of assessment information so that:
 - teachers use this information to provide a good level of challenge for all pupils, especially the more able
 - teachers provide effective written feedback to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Improve the management of the few pupils whose behaviour disrupts the learning of others.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their different starting points because they enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. They work hard in lessons, especially when they are given scope to learn independently. They move from having a level of skills typically expected for their age when they start school to above average attainment in national assessments by the end of Year 2. School data and inspection evidence shows that pupils in Year 4 have maintained the good standards they achieved in Year 2. The vast majority are on course to reach the expected level for their age by the end of the year, and a good proportion are on course to exceed this.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and they know what steps to take if they have concerns. They say that bullying is not an issue and if it does occur teachers will deal with it quickly. Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle, they eat sensibly and enjoy taking plenty of vigorous exercise in the exciting playgrounds that the school has developed. The vast majority of pupils behave well, in class and around school. They are kind and considerate, and support each other well in lessons. However, a very small minority of pupils with behavioural difficulties occasionally disrupt lessons, which reduces the rate of learning for other pupils. The school already has plans in hand to review its behaviour policy and procedures, and to improve the consistency of behaviour management across the school. Pupils are proud to contribute to the life of the school through the school council, though in discussion older pupils said they would enjoy more responsibilities for looking after others and helping to run the school. Again, the school has plans in hand to develop a 'buddy system' to provide opportunities for older pupils to care for younger ones. By the time they leave the school in Year 4, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are well prepared with basic skills, good attendance patterns and a strong sense of teamwork to succeed in the next stage of learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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	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	3
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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have a good understanding of how pupils learn. They have good relationships with pupils, make clear their expectations of hard work and give good support to individuals whenever they need it. This in turn ensures that pupils work hard to please their teachers. Teachers' use of questions is not consistently effective in developing pupils' thinking further or in assessing their understanding of ideas and strategies. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are skilled at supporting pupils while encouraging them to do the work set by themselves. This ensures that these pupils feel the same sense of achievement as others in their class. This was clear in a group working on the Read Write Inc programme. The assessment of pupils' progress, though improving, is variable in quality and does not contribute enough to planning the next steps for pupils, especially the more able. Assessment information is not always used with enough precision to set the correct level of challenge for these pupils. The school is aware of these inconsistencies and improving assessment is one of its current priorities. Marking and feedback to pupils does not always make clear to pupils how they can improve. Not enough attention is given to improving the quality of pupils' written work, which is too often marred by untidy and poor presentation.

The curriculum is well planned to ensure that it is relevant to the age of pupils, engages their interest and helps them make good progress in basic skills. Visits to the Beamish

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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museum and other sites enrich their learning, while many visitors share their specialist knowledge and expertise to enhance pupils' skills and extend their horizons. Pupils have much enjoyed working with a local theatre group to improve their writing skills this year. Excellent partnerships, with the local federation of schools, have provided a wealth of learning activities through the well-planned sharing of good resources. This has allowed this small school to provide specialist teaching in French, music, including learning a musical instrument, physical education and religious education; all of which are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. Recent initiatives to develop a more creative curriculum are beginning to impact well on pupils' learning in the broader curriculum. Clear links are made between subjects and pupils are given more opportunity to plan and direct their own learning. This, together with the development of good team skills, is making a strong contribution to their personal development.

Pupils are well cared for and supported to do well in school. Staff know their pupils and all adults work closely to provide a safe, secure environment for learning and play. The school's response to pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities or emotional and behavioural difficulties is excellent. Their needs are identified early and prompt action by the special educational needs coordinator ensures specialist support is made available. One parental comment speaks for several, 'The school has done everything possible to accommodate my child's difficulties. This is testament to the excellent practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has created a strong team since taking over leadership of the school. All staff are committed to improving the provision in the school, as seen in the good development of the curriculum and developments to the way that pupils learn. Staff willingly take on responsibilities, monitor the work of the school and have an accurate picture of its main strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher's heavy teaching commitment has restricted her opportunities for monitoring and evaluating standards, for example, through the scrutiny of pupils' books, which has allowed some weaker practice, such as some poor presentation of work, to go unnoticed. The school's provision for safeguarding pupils is excellent. All systems and procedures are of good quality and vulnerable pupils are especially well cared for. The headteacher and staff ensure the safe transfer of pupils to and from the dining hall, which is situated across a

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road from the school. The school promotes equal opportunities well by providing the support and encouragement to allow all pupils to make the same good progress.

Governors give good support to the school's development. They fulfil their responsibilities well. They are ambitious to do even better and to this end have undertaken a review of their skills and have planned training to ensure that the governing body is well equipped to monitor and evaluate the work of the school with greater accuracy. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There are strengths in the development of play and recreational facilities for the local community. Links with communities further afield to develop pupils' understanding of the diversity of society are underdeveloped. However, the school has registered with the Linking Schools Network and the British Council to improve these links.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the Nursery with skills that are broadly typical for their age and by the end of Reception most achieve above average standards. Well planned and exciting learning opportunities fire children's enthusiasm and give them an excellent start to learning. In the Nursery, a strong emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills helps them to settle in quickly and become confident, independent learners. These skills are further developed when children move into Reception and form the basis of the rapid progress they make throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's welfare, safety and well-being are given the highest priority. Every child is well known to staff through careful observation and regular discussion with parents.

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Each child is treated as an individual and has their needs met through skilful planning to help them make the next steps in all areas of their learning.

Learning journals, which record each child's progress and experiences, are highly valued by parents who say that they make them feel truly involved in their children's learning. Parents are delighted with the links that staff make with them and are full of praise for how well their children are cared for and progress. Teaching is outstanding, because staff have very good knowledge of how young children learn and what they need to learn next. Excellent learning about letter sounds in both Nursery and Reception demonstrate how well teachers develop the skills of all children. Outstanding leadership, based on expert knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, promotes excellent teamwork by valuing the contribution of every individual, setting high standards and having high expectations of what colleagues can do.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

While the majority of parents and carers hold favourable views of the school, a significant minority would appreciate more regular communication, especially about their children's learning and progress, and school events. Inspectors agree that newsletters to parents and carers are not as frequent as is seen in most schools, but that information about pupils' progress is provided satisfactorily. A small proportion of parents and carers have some concerns about behaviour. Inspectors found that the behaviour of most pupils is good, but that there are instances when a few pupils disrupt the learning of others. The school is aware of this issue and rightly is making improvements to teachers' behaviour management skills a priority for action.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newbrough Church of England First 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 70 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	72	15	26	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	44	76	12	21	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	48	22	38	8	14	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	53	22	38	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	32	55	23	40	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	52	20	34	5	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	69	17	29	1	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)	31	53	19	33	2	3	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	53	23	40	3	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	52	20	34	3	5	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	55	15	26	4	7	4	7
The school is led and managed effectively	36	62	10	17	5	9	4	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	64	16	28	4	7	1	2

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.



4 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Newbrough Church of England First School, Hexham, NE47 5AQ

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to Mrs Beckett and me when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed seeing you at work and play, and found what you told us about your school very helpful. We think yours is a good school and here are some of the reasons why.

- You work hard, make good progress and achieve well, and by Year 4 you are nearly all reaching the level expected for your age, and some of you exceed this level.
- You develop good personal skills, that prepare you well for the future, though we think that some of you could be supported to behave better in some lessons.
- You are well taught and have a good curriculum which lets you learn independently and enjoy your learning a great deal. Your school makes excellent links with other schools to enrich your learning.
- You are well cared for and supported in school. You told us that teachers take good care of you and we agree; everyone gets the chance to do well.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors do a good job in running the school. They are careful to find out what needs to improve and then they do something about it.

There are just a few things we think your school needs to do to get even better. One is to make sure all pupils are well behaved in all lessons, as nearly all of you are. Another is for teachers to check carefully how well you are doing so they can plan challenging work, which we know you enjoy. Finally, we think teachers should write in your books what you need to do to improve your work, so you get even better than you are now.

Mrs Beckett and I wish you a very happy and successful year.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector

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