

Newton Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132780
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	341338
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Christine Goodwin
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Sears
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed all of the 10 teachers over 14 lessons. Meetings were held with pupils, members of staff and the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at information about the attainment of pupils and their progress, the school improvement plan, curriculum planning and minutes of the governing body. Questionnaires from 43 parents and carers, 14 staff and 94 pupils were analysed.

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

- the extent to which planning of learning and the quality of teaching impact on the attainment of all boys and more-able girls and boys
- the effectiveness of the promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural development through the curriculum and school ethos
- pupils' ownership of their targets and how integral they are to their learning and progress.

Information about the school

The school is average sized compared to others of its type. Most pupils are White British and few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, with the majority of these having moderate learning difficulties. A much higher percentage of pupils join or leave the school at other than the expected times. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.

The school has achieved Activemark and, in 2009, gained the International Schools Award and Healthy School status. It meets in full the Extended Schools criteria. Within the last few weeks, the boys have gained first equal place in a national reading competition, 'Reading Champions,' which was organised to encourage boys, nationally, to read. The school works in partnership with a cluster of 10 local primary schools and two secondary schools to enhance learning, particularly that of pupils with specific gifts and talents.

The Rhyme Time Nursery, run by an outside provider, operates on the site. It caters daily between 8.00am to 6.00pm for infants and children up to the age of four and also provides a breakfast club and after-school club.

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. It is its detailed knowledge and understanding of the needs and circumstances of the pupils from the time that they join the Early Years Foundation Stage that have been the foundation for the good improvements made since the last inspection. The result is a very caring, supportive and yet challenging environment in which pupils thrive, developing good personal skills as they move through the school. Pupils' behaviour is good and their attendance has risen to above average. The headteacher leads the school strongly and the good teamwork of the staff, robust monitoring of the school's performance and very appropriate initiatives have promoted good-quality teaching and good progress of pupils from their starting points. Focused subject leaders also drive improvement. The governing body, led well by the chair, cares deeply about the school and is very supportive. It knows that it does not yet check all of the school's work rigorously enough to be able to influence the direction of the school. The school has progressed from being satisfactory at the last inspection and evidence of improvement since then confirms its good capacity to move further forward.

Pupils' attainment is only very broadly average, but standards reflect pupils' good achievement, often from low starting points. They achieve less well in writing than in other subjects by the end of Year 6. However, pupils' progress, including in writing, is accelerating due to good teaching and the continued focus on this key skill. The level of challenge for more-able pupils is not regularly as well matched to their needs as that to other groups of pupils. Consequently, the more able do not always move forward in all lessons as quickly as they could. Pupils know their targets and are keen to achieve them. Regular opportunities to assess their own work give them good ownership of their progress and enthusiasm to learn. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and constantly discuss their learning with them in lessons. However, there is some inconsistency from teacher to teacher in the recording of pupils' achievements and what learners need to do to progress further.

Careful planning of the good curriculum, to engage pupils' more in their learning, is successful in sustaining the interest of both boys and girls, promoting their enjoyment and achievement well. Opportunities for spirituality abound through the curriculum, where pupils often show awe at what they have discovered about themselves, their capabilities and the world. Good planning incorporates chances for pupils to reflect on what they have learnt and the wonder and the diversity of the world. Regular whole-school theme days about other countries, which have resulted in pupils' wider knowledge and understanding of other cultures and lifestyles, have delighted every learner. However, it is the school's ethos of value for, and respect of, each other that lies at the heart of pupils' good spiritual and cultural development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment through the school, particularly for pupils capable of reaching higher levels by:
 - ensuring that the systems for tracking pupils' progress and attainment are always used carefully in planning work that promotes at least good challenge
 - making sure that marking of pupils' work is consistent across the school in telling them their achievements and their next steps in learning.
- Increase the effectiveness of the governing body by ensuring that it keeps the work of the school constantly under review and acts upon its findings so that it is better able to influence the direction of the school.

■

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress from the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of consistently effective teaching and guidance. All abilities progress well, including more-able pupils, although their progress occasionally lags a little behind that of others. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who find some aspects of learning difficult, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language also achieve well because of specific and effective support from teaching assistants. Teaching methods and activities cater equally well for boys and girls. A Year 1 lesson was successful in promoting pupils' good understanding of 'counting-on' because the teacher used 'leaping frogs' to capture their attention, and there were five tasks to match the wide range of ability. A very effective Year 5 literacy lesson used the recent visit to a theme park to develop pupils' descriptive writing skills. The lesson accelerated pupils' progress because of the teacher's very good subject knowledge and pupils' recall of prior learning, which together produced complex sentences and highly descriptive writing. Teachers are increasingly conducting learning in the playground, as in a good Year 4 lesson where a brisk pace and outdoor learning made the experience very relevant in developing pupils' knowledge of perimeters.

The pupils have a well-developed knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy, and the importance of making well-informed choices affecting their well-being, through a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme. Strengthened by the ethos of the school and good modelling by staff, pupils are considerate and kind towards others, knowing and showing the right way to treat others. Pupils know that their views are taken into account by the school. The school council's focus on keeping healthy, for example, has resulted in a competition to find the class with the highest percentage walking to school and regular, organised lunchtime sports. These activities fully justify their Activemark award and Healthy School status. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to take responsibility, which they are proud to do, both in the school and in the community. These opportunities enable pupils to develop confidence, self-esteem and skills. Learners develop useful skills for the future, taking into account their attainment by the end of Year 6.

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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	3
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	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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school provides a bright and welcoming environment for learning which is strengthened by very positive relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers manage behaviour well so that learning can proceed without interruption. They explain clearly what pupils are meant to learn and tasks have a specific focus, which the teachers revisit during the lesson to ensure that its purpose is achieved. In most lessons, there is a good balance of teaching and opportunities for pupils to learn for themselves. The pace is brisk and the different activities in each lesson sustain pupils' interests. There are a few lessons where tasks are not pitched at the right level and expectations are not high enough, especially for pupils capable of reaching higher standards. In the best lessons, questioning is used particularly well to extend pupils' learning and to encourage them to think more for themselves. Teachers' assessments of pupils' work in lessons is helpful in accelerating their progress. Pupils are increasingly evaluating their own learning and that of their peers, which is developing their critical-thinking skills.

The curriculum is a major factor in the good progress that pupils make. It stimulates their imagination through activities that interest and often excite them and allows them

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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lots of opportunities to practise new skills. The starting point is pupils' own experience, which links their learning together. Based around literacy and numeracy, pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning are planned and promoted well to also strengthen their personal development. It is also a creative curriculum, with pupils learning through themes which cover several subjects, for example, music and information and communication technology (ICT). Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Those children who have a specific ability or talent are provided for soundly through links with other schools, although provision in lessons is a developing aspect. Partnership work with other schools results in a greater range of enhancement activities, such as inter-school sports competitions showing that the school is making good use of its Extended Schools status. There is a wide range of popular after-school clubs which reflect pupils' interests and enable them to discover their talents.

The school places a high emphasis on ensuring pupils' security and happiness. Inspection evidence, including the testimony of parents and carers and pupils, shows that they achieve this well. The pupils are cared for, nurtured and supported, within an ethos of high expectations. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who have specific behavioural, social and emotional issues, are guided very well, aided by specialist support from outside agencies. Similarly, effective teaching assistants skilfully implement programmes of support, with individual education plans matching closely pupils' specific needs. Throughout the school, pupils' transition to the next class, stage of learning, and to secondary school, is carefully planned. Pupils say they are confident about the next stage of their education because of this.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's good understanding of the school's performance and its needs, through rigorous monitoring and evaluation, has resulted in actions which enable it to move forward confidently. In particular, his detailed analysis of the quality of teaching, which incorporates targets for teachers, is regularly revisited to ensure that the quality of teaching continues to improve. Although, occasionally, the more able could be stretched more in some lessons, pupils of all abilities and groupings achieve well. Pupils receive equal opportunity to succeed, and no group underachieves. Ambition is embedded in this school, with all staff committed to school improvement and sharing

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the headteacher's vision. The school is able to adapt to changing circumstances, such as staff changes, because of the continuous development of teachers' skills. A flexible approach is particularly evident in the work of subject leaders, who confidently assess the quality of provision and its impact on pupils' progress. The governing body is equally committed and oversees safeguarding procedures soundly, although reviewing of practices and procedures is not always regular or robust enough. The school's effectiveness is strengthened by its very wide range of partnerships. Parents and carers are a priority and recognised as a key to accelerating pupils' all-round progress. They are valued and respected by the staff and kept well informed about their children's learning. Other partnerships enhance the quality of the curriculum and support the well-being of the pupils. The promotion of community cohesion is good and a developing strength of the school's work. It promotes pupils' understanding of other cultures effectively, locally and internationally, with the latter justifying the school's International Award. Links further afield in this country are developing.

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	3
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	3
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

Although many of the children start school with low levels of knowledge and skills, especially in communication, language and literacy, they all make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their quick start to learning is facilitated by the staff's effective communication with parents and carers and pre-school providers. Staff gain a close understanding of individual children's needs through very positive relationships with parents and carers, who are fully involved in their children's learning.

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Effective leadership and management are demonstrated in the careful daily assessment of the children's learning. Consequently, activities adopted enable children of all abilities to make rapid progress. There is a focus on developing children's social skills as well as their speaking and listening skills. Every aspect of learning is covered in the wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. Healthy and safe lifestyles and learning to make choices and to take responsibility are built in to daily routines and the curriculum. There is much excitement in learning, seen in an activity where children made bear prints that led to the bear's door. Together with good teaching, the activities enable many children to reach standards that are approaching or reaching the national average by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, there is variation from year to year, depending on the children's starting points.

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

The small minority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were, overall, very supportive of the school's work. One parent wrote, 'The school is well run and has made great strides in its caring and learning environment.' Another said, 'My child has progressed and flourished and her confidence and self-belief have grown. I marvel at the ways the teachers encourage life-skills, and the many opportunities that the children experience.' There is strong agreement that the pupils are safe. Several parents and carers have individual concerns, including those relating to the quality of teaching, early enough notification about events, changes in the organisation of classes and no taking notice of what they say. They have been shared with the headteacher, while preserving the confidentiality of the parents and carers and the pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 43 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 232 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	51	15	35	5	12	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	21	49	21	49	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	37	20	47	3	7	4	9
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	49	14	33	3	7	5	12
The teaching is good at this school	19	44	16	37	6	14	2	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	35	22	51	2	5	3	7
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	44	18	42	5	12	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	28	27	63	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	35	21	49	0	0	6	14
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	21	26	60	4	9	3	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	21	22	51	8	19	3	7
The school is led and managed effectively	15	35	19	44	4	9	5	12
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	47	17	40	4	9	2	5

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



1 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newton Road Community Primary School, Northamptonshire, NN10 0HH

On behalf of the inspection team, I am writing to thank you for welcoming us into your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learning and playing.

Your school is a good one. It has improved a lot since the last inspection. For example, teaching is good and you make good progress. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a great start and make good progress. This continues through the school. Your behaviour is good and your attendance is now above average. Well done! The headteacher and his staff are the people who have brought about all of these changes, working very hard and planning the school's work very carefully. You find lessons interesting because they are planned to match your interests and give you lots of chances to learn for yourselves. The school cares for you very well, so that you feel safe and secure. The staff make sure that you have lots of opportunities to develop a range of skills that you will need when you are older.

The headteacher and staff want the school to be even better. There are improvements that can be made. First, standards need to rise across the school, including for pupils who are capable of reaching higher levels in their work. We have asked the staff to make sure that they always use carefully the information that they have about your progress to plan work that is just at the right level. Your teachers tell you often in lessons how well you are doing and what to do next. We have asked them to write this information in your books so that you are very clear about what you have done well and the next steps in your learning. You are lucky to have a governing body that supports the school so well. We have asked the governors to make sure that they are constantly checking the school's work to make sure that they have a good understanding of how well it is doing.

I know you will help the school with these improvements.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector

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