

# Newton Ferrers Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137664
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	378702
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alex Baxter

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	106
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Maguire
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Dillons The Green Newton Ferrers, Plymouth PL8 1BE
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	3–4 November 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons taught by five teachers. The inspectors also attended collective worship/assemblies, observed break times and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. In addition, the team analysed 47 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those returned by 15 pupils and 11 staff.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The development of pupils' independent learning skills to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging and effective in accelerating pupils' achievement.
- The effectiveness of strategies to integrate pupils arriving from other schools and to meet pupils' needs across the range of ability.
- The effectiveness of strategies taken by leaders and managers, at all levels, to build on effective practice and sustain improvement.

## Information about the school

This primary school is smaller than average in size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage and there is a below average percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the normal times is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and increasing, and varies significantly in the differing year groups across the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a combined Reception/Year1 class. The breakfast club was included in this inspection as part of the school's own extended curriculum, but the after-school club was subject to a separate inspection. The school has achieved several awards, including, most recently in July of this year, the 'Green Flag Eco Award'. Since September 2010, the school has been part of the First Federation, a hard federation of five primary schools in Devon. The federation has an executive headteacher, who has overall responsibility for all the schools, a federation head of learning, and a head of teaching and learning who has day-to-day responsibility for the running of Newton Ferrers. The federation also has a shared governing body. The First Federation is now identified as an Academy Converter, having applied with a group of other schools to become an Academy of Primary Schools.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Newton Ferrers is an outstanding school. The caring ethos of the school, now enriched by its wider partnerships across the federation, is one which welcomes and includes all pupils equally. As a result, pupils are caring of each other and adults. The shared knowledge that everyone's efforts are valued means that pupils throw themselves wholeheartedly into their work, consistently give of their best and make excellent progress. Parents and carers recognise and appreciate these qualities; one expressed a typical view in the comment, 'We could not be happier with our children's education.'

The driving force behind the school's success is undoubtedly the inspirational executive headteacher and his excellent collaborative work with other very capable senior leaders. Their passionate focus on developing high-quality teaching and learning has brought the full benefits of the federation's expertise to lift the school's provision to an outstanding level.

Strong governance, representative of all schools in the federation and with clearly defined aims and responsibilities, in combination with close collaboration between senior staff, underpins excellent self-evaluation and ensures that the right priorities are tackled rigorously. This is seen in the pupils' above average attainment and, in particular, in the improved and now high levels of attainment in mathematics and self-enquiry skills, as well as improving writing skills. Although writing is getting better, pupils' ability to form complex sentences still requires further improvement.

Inherent strengths in care and in pupils' personal qualities are enhanced by excellent teaching and learning, and now secure pupils' excellent academic achievement. Exemplary teaching enables pupils to become highly proficient in learning independently while sustaining a keen willingness to share ideas and work collaboratively with each other. These outcomes further illustrate the school's ability and determination to sustain its excellent capacity for future development.

This is a highly inclusive school where all staff work diligently to safeguard pupils' welfare and provide a consistently excellent standard of care, guidance and support. Children make a happy and fruitful start to school in Reception or with an increasing number joining later into other year groups. All staff, assisted by high-quality assessment of the pupils' individual needs, ensure that all pupils are known extremely well, have their needs met and feel valued.

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Many of the pupils' excellent academic and personal gains, notably their outstanding behaviour, and adoption of healthy living and thorough awareness of how to stay safe, stem from a curriculum that is enhanced by a wealth of interesting activities, which include memorable moments across a range of expressive arts and sporting experiences. Such activities inspire the pupils' very positive attitudes and love of learning. Clearly, pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is high because learning is often fun and interests them; as a result, their progress is outstanding.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Build upon the existing good practice across the school to improve pupils' ability to write lively and meaningful sentences so that pupils attain as well in writing as they do in speaking and reading.

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

**1**

In recent years, the school has been particularly successful in developing pupils' independent, collaborative and investigative learning skills, and this has contributed to the outstanding achievement of all groups of pupils. This is despite an increasing number of pupils joining some year groups with below average basic skills and learning needs. There has been a significant improvement in the pupils' mathematical and problem-solving skills, highlighted as an area for development in the previous inspection. Learning seen in lessons, out-of-class activities and small group interventions, both in and out of school, consistently shows that pupils greatly enjoy their work and make excellent progress. This applies equally to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, more-able pupils and those who joined the school during Years 3 to 6. Most pupils join Reception with skills that are broadly in line with typical expectations, while the levels of skill of those arriving later are much more variable. Regardless of their starting points, they make excellent progress. This, combined with their high rate of attendance and great enthusiasm for learning, means that they are exceptionally well prepared for the future.

Children make good progress in Reception, where they quickly develop very positive attitudes to school and learning. Pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the rest of school so that by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment has been mostly above average in recent years. However, in response to excellent teaching and learning, attainment is improving further across the school, with high levels of skills already evident in speaking and reading and in mathematics and independent enquiry. Excellent progress and high levels of attainment were evident in most mathematics lessons, for example in Year 6, where the pupils demonstrated excellent understanding of line graphs by offering thoughtful comments and confidently posing their own questions. Increasingly expressive writing skills were also evident in pupils' books, showing the positive impact of promoting discussion to develop vocabulary and sentence construction. Nevertheless, there is scope to improve pupils' writing further, particularly the quality of their sentences. High levels of speaking, vocabulary

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and reading skills were seen, during most literacy lessons. Very well-developed independent and team working was also evident as pupils researched their topic on Ancient Greece, making highly effective use of computers as well as the excellent displays of high-quality creative art and craft work.

The pupils’ unwavering interest and engagement in learning further reflect excellent achievements and underpin their enthusiastic contributions to school and community events. Joyful participation permeates their regular visits to the church, frequent charitable donations and their full support of May Day and Christmas productions. Pupils are also diligent in exercising responsibility as ‘family group leaders’ or as members of the ‘eco group’ and ‘ethos group’, where they represent the views of others discussing environmental issues and contributing to the federation’s Christian ethos respectively. The pupils’ exemplary relationships and respect for others is also clearly seen in the way new pupils are so warmly welcomed and included from the moment they enter school.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers’ engagement with pupils and the way in which they promote independent learning are particularly impressive. Teachers plan with great care to meet learners’ differing needs and adapt their lessons quickly in response to their assessment of pupils’ understanding and progress. By these means, pupils across the range of abilities and those new to the school are supported very effectively. Teaching is also typified by challenging questioning that stimulates pupils’ thinking, and a strong

<sup>1</sup> 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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expectation that pupils should share and refine ideas with each other. Focused use of ‘talking partners’ increases pupils’ enthusiasm and ability to articulate ideas, and extends their understanding. Learning during literacy lessons, for example when investigating ‘Bonfire Night’ in Years 2 and 3, was also enhanced by the teacher’s sharp questioning, which built well on links with previous work and focused productively on developing pupils’ understanding of learning objectives. Regularly in all lessons, including in Reception and Year 1, pupils are taught how to check their own work against clear success criteria and, as a result, pupils gain an excellent understanding of the quality of their work and what they need to do next in order to move forward. All staff consistently emphasise the pupils’ speaking and vocabulary skills, and such agreed approaches are also steadily extending pupils’ sentence-writing skills.

The curriculum is truly outstanding in the way subjects are seamlessly linked together. Examples of this were seen when inspectors observed literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills taught through researching historical and geographical concepts as part of topic work. Teachers make excellent use of volunteers, partner schools and other providers to help work towards awards, for example the recent Green Flag Eco Award. The ‘before school club’ provides a safe environment for pupils with fun activities which set the tone for the school day ahead. The wealth of high-quality displays in all parts of the school reflects the wide breadth of activities available, especially across the expressive arts and sports, which enrich the pupils’ learning. In addition, the work of the ‘ethos group’, which contains staff and pupils from all the schools in the federation, promotes agreed Christian principles and the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very successfully.

The outstanding care, guidance and support provided by the school are enriched by the specialist support of senior managers across the federation. In addition, all staff are informed by agreed and consistently implemented practices, and are diligent in ensuring full adherence with safeguarding, health and safety, and child protection procedures. Excellent links with parents and carers as well as outside agencies also underpin the pupils’ confident enjoyment of school and high attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The very well respected executive headteacher leads a strong drive and ambition for continued improvement. He is extremely well supported across the federation by a team of very able senior colleagues, all of whom benefit from having very precisely defined leadership and management roles. For example, the federation’s head of learning oversees safeguarding the pupils’ welfare, and this school’s head of teaching and learning plays a key role in sustaining outstanding teaching and learning.

Together, senior colleagues use agreed procedures very consistently and successfully, for example in securing pupils’ excellent involvement in self-evaluation.

The single governing body, which oversees the work of all the schools in the federation, fulfils its statutory duties and sustains full adherence with safeguarding and other statutory procedures, such as staff recruitment and child protection checks. Members of the governing body are also extremely well informed and are therefore able to monitor the quality of provision and pupils’ achievements, hold the school to account and secure excellent value for money.

Since federation, the school has gone from strength to strength. Improved sharing of information across a widened breadth of expertise and excellent partnerships with parents, carers and outside agencies has lifted pupils’ academic achievement to match continuing high levels of personal achievement. Pupils are treated equally, and are kept free from discrimination because the school closely checks the performance of different groups of pupils, as seen, for example, in the improved achievement of pupils new to the school. The school promotes community cohesion very effectively by sharing good practice and staff expertise, for example in developing collaborative learning across the curriculum. This takes the form of whole-school themes and topic weeks such as ‘Africa’. The school has also benefited from widened links across each federated school’s local community as well as with schools in contrasting areas.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>

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**The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money**

**1**

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Excellent leadership, significantly strengthened by sharply defined roles and shared expertise across the federation, is promoting a quickening momentum of improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is already evident in the detailed assessment procedures, which accurately identify the next steps in children’s learning and underpin the children’s good progress in this mixed Reception and Year 1 class. High-quality care and safeguarding of the children’s welfare, excellent links with parents and carers, and very supportive induction arrangements also help the children settle very confidently into school life and provide a boost to their successful learning. In addition, stimulating indoor and outdoor resources, including the spacious natural areas in the school grounds, also promote joy in children’s learning at school. For example, children showed great enthusiasm as they willingly collaborated with each other to collect twigs, leaves and rocks, and created homes for ‘The Three Little Pigs’. Consistently good teaching and partner working between staff ensure that children make impressive gains in their personal and social development and in extending their speaking skills. The good curriculum, which has benefited from sustained improvement over recent years, makes effective use of well-resourced learning areas and includes a careful balance of good adult-led learning and activities chosen by the children themselves. All staff, very ably supported by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, are now focusing on promoting children’s learning further through the use of high-quality adult questioning, as well as providing more opportunities for children to write about their experiences.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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	1

## Views of parents and carers

There was an above average response to the questionnaire sent to parents and carers to seek their views about the school. The very large majority of those who responded to the questionnaire and the small number of parents interviewed by an inspector expressed full agreement with the work of the school and, in particular, almost all indicated that their children are kept safe and enjoy school. Additional written comments were mostly very positive, with particularly appreciative views expressed about the school’s very welcoming and caring ethos. Very few concerns

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were expressed, mostly about homework and how the school takes account of the parents' views. The inspection team found that most homework is targeted very closely to pupils' needs and contributes very supportively to their learning. A few parents and carers understandably had concerns about the relatively new federation, but several responses to the questionnaire and inspection evidence highlighted significant benefits to pupils' education stemming from sharing staff expertise across the schools in the federation.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newton Ferrers Cof E 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 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 106 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	74	12	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	62	17	36	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	23	49	21	45	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	51	18	38	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	68	10	21	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	29	62	12	26	4	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	53	20	43	2	4	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)	27	57	7	15	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	28	60	15	32	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	60	13	28	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	55	10	21	8	17	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	64	14	30	3	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	35	74	9	19	3	6	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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Newton Ferrers Cof E Primary School, Plymouth, PL8 1BE**

Thank you very much for welcoming us in such a friendly manner during our recent inspection of your school. You were all extremely courteous and polite, and your excellent behaviour was a joy to observe. Special thanks to the Family Group leaders and other pupils who talked with me so enthusiastically about your school. They said that everyone is treated as a friend at this school. We agree with you, and with many of your parents and carers, that Newton Ferrers is an outstanding school.

These are the other main things we found.

- You sustain concentration extremely well in lessons and make excellent progress, especially in your speaking, reading and mathematics skills. Your willingness and ability to work either independently or with each other are also very impressive.
- You clearly show that you feel very safe and you say that this is because of the high quality of care provided by the adults who work in the school. Again, we fully agree with you.
- Teaching and learning are extremely successful because teachers provide lots of interesting and challenging learning activities and help you to learn really well for yourselves.
- You contribute extremely well in and out of lessons. You are also totally committed to living healthily and clearly enjoy your time at school.
- Your school is led in an exemplary way and continues to go from strength to strength in partnership with the other schools in the federation. This is because your executive headteacher and other senior colleagues are outstanding leaders who work closely as a team with staff, governors, parents and carers, and other people to ensure that you receive the best support possible to help you to progress.

All this has created an excellent school, which as a member of a federation is fully committed to further improvement. To continue this aim, I have asked the executive headteacher and his colleagues to help you to write more interesting and meaningful sentences so that your writing is as good as your speaking and reading skills. All of you can help by continuing to think carefully about your work and showing the same determination to learn for yourselves and with each other.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter  
Lead inspector

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