

Newbold Verdon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	119942
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379914
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2012
Lead 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	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicky Yates-Smith
Headteacher	Michael Staunton
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2009
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Age group	05–11
Inspection date(s)	19–20 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock

Additional Inspector

Jo Curd

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors spent approximately nine hours observing 10 teachers in 17 lessons. They held meetings with senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's data on pupils' achievement, school policies relating to their health and safety, and improvement planning. The inspectors analysed the 70 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is a smaller school than most others of its type. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Although the proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average, the proportion who are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs, is above average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties or behavioural issues.

The school incorporates an autism unit for 15 pupils. The governing body also provides morning childcare for 23 children from three years of age through the Honeysuckle Playgroup.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. It is part of the Bosworth development group which consists of seven primary schools, a high school and a college.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Although children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the playgroup, and pupils in the unit achieve well, the school is not yet good because the quality of teaching throughout the rest of the school is inconsistent. Leaders and managers do not monitor their areas regularly or in enough detail to be able to drive school improvement as quickly as they could. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Children make good progress in the playgroup, in Reception and in the unit, from their individual starting points. In Key Stages 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory, resulting in pupils' satisfactory progress over time. They reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is satisfactory. There is some good teaching, including in Key Stages 1 and 2. However, planning is not based consistently carefully on data about the levels at which pupils work. This results in tasks that do not provide an accurate level of challenge to match pupils' abilities.
- Behaviour is satisfactory. Many pupils always behave well, and behaviour is good around the school. However, it is variable in lessons. This is because teaching and learning does not fully engage all pupils. The pace of learning is not always brisk and some activities are not interesting or stimulating enough. Pupils feel safe in school within an environment in which all are valued.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. School improvement planning focuses on improving the quality of teaching. Teachers' performance management targets and staff training reflect this. The committed leaders and managers are developing their roles quickly but their monitoring of teaching is not detailed enough or carried out frequently enough to ensure that improvements are consistent and sustained.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards, particularly throughout Key Stage 1 and 2, through consistently good teaching by:
 - planning lessons that are based on data about the levels at which pupils work to ensure accuracy of challenge for all pupils
 - ensuring all pupils are fully engaged throughout lessons by maintaining a brisk pace and activities that are interesting and stimulating.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by ensuring that leaders and managers increase the frequency and detail of monitoring to ensure that improvements are consistent throughout the school and sustained.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enjoy attending the playgroup. Speaking and listening activities are part of all learning, so that for example, following a story about lemonade, they made some. They make good progress, joining Reception with generally below average levels of knowledge and skills. The children in Reception present as confident, inquisitive learners and develop and practise many new skills, including making choices. A group of children worked cooperatively to dig-up soil and were delighted to find a worm and snails, both of which triggered further questioning and learning. Most pupils make quick progress and reach broadly average levels of attainment by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, most children form letters accurately and enunciate words clearly. Many are able to write simple sentences and extend them. A few use capital letters and full stops accurately.

In the unit, the pupils make good progress towards their individual goals, particularly in communication and self-esteem. A number of pupils who had no speech on entry are now more confidently expressing themselves. Pupils' independence is promoted very appropriately, such as through trips to the shops with the staff to make purchases.

Reading levels by the end of Key Stage 1 are average. All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress overall through Key Stages 1 and 2 because there is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Although almost all of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire believed that their children make good progress, it is not the case in enough lessons to produce better than satisfactory progress by the end of Year 6. However when teaching is good or better, progress accelerates. In

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a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils of all abilities made excellent progress in determining the relationship between the measures of a circle and in developing their investigative skills. Pupils in Year 6 make good progress over time in transferring their literacy and numeracy skills across subjects and in taking responsibility for their learning.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make satisfactory progress throughout the school, including in constructing letters and simple sentences, through appropriate support.

Quality of teaching

There is consistently good teaching in the playgroup and in Reception. It is regularly good in the unit. In the playgroup and Reception, there is a good balance of teacher-led activities and child-centred learning, both in the classroom and outdoors. The children show pride in organising themselves for learning and play. Teaching in the unit is effective because the staff know accurately the individual needs and concerns of each pupil. In a small group, supported by several learning support assistants, a carefully planned activity to promote speaking and listening skills resulted in children enjoying and developing confidence in singing, in speaking to each other and in articulating their individual choices.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. Progress quickens in upper Key Stage 2 where teaching is more consistently good. However, over time, progress is satisfactory throughout the school because of inconsistencies in practices. In particular, in some lessons, planning is not sufficiently thorough, leading to work that is too easy or too hard. Pupils capable of reaching higher levels are not always encouraged to extend their thinking or apply their skills to unfamiliar situations. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, while some groups of pupils made good progress in researching how to grow a plant, pupils working at lower levels made slower progress because the language used was beyond their reading capacity. Some lessons have very interesting introductions which engage and motivate pupils and learning proceeds briskly but this is not always so.

Both in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the teaching of letters and sounds is daily and systematic. As a result, pupils are developing a secure understanding of the sounds made by different letters and combinations of letters, and are increasingly able to break them down.

Marking, which has been a priority for the school, usually tells pupils their achievements and the next steps. Some pupils know their targets but they are not regularly a focus in lessons. There are regular opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their awareness of diversity of cultures through regular visits and visitors.

Every parent and carer who responded to the questionnaire and most pupils said that teaching is good. In some parts of the school it is good but not consistently so.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Many pupils always behave well, and behaviour is usually good at play and round the school. Regular learning with each other, including older pupils supporting those in the unit, benefits all pupils, and promotes their respect for, and understanding of, each other's needs. However, when activities do not motivate and interest pupils and the pace of learning is slow, some pupils lose focus, become restless and occasionally, distract others. As a result, learning slows. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, including in the playgroup and in good lessons, pupils behave sensibly all of the time. Although some pupils in the unit have behavioural issues, the staff manage their behaviour well, and over time pupils develop skills in considering and modifying their actions.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say that the school keeps their children safe. Pupils say the same. Younger pupils, for example, understand that fire is dangerous, and their learning links to the importance of fire practices. All pupils know the potential dangers of using the internet and those asked showed knowledge relative to their age of how they can protect themselves from a range of possible dangers. The school's evidence indicates that there is very little bullying and pupils know how to deal with it if it does occur. Attendance is average over time and improving as the school's strategies take effect.

Leadership and management

The headteacher knows the school's strengths and its priorities. During the inspection, there was full agreement about the quality of teaching, between the inspectors and the school. The staff work well as a team, encouraged by their roles in promoting improvements. Their performance management targets are linked to school improvement priorities and staff training is closely aligned to both. The school works increasingly with cluster schools to strengthen, for example, literacy and numeracy practice. The headteacher's introduction of more regular and detailed collection and analysis of data about pupils' progress is enabling a sharper focus on raising standards. Regular pupil progress meetings have been established as a result and provide a greater scrutiny of individual pupils' achievement and more challenging targets. Their impact on progress is working through and is satisfactory. Senior and middle leaders monitor the school's work and focus on practices to improve pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. However the monitoring is not detailed or comprehensive enough to ensure that the improvements made are consistent throughout the school and are being maintained. Monitoring of the progress of pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs, which has a new leader, is work in progress.

The governing body is an effective partner in helping the school to drive improvement. They ask probing questions about the progress the school is making, due to their comprehensive knowledge of the school's performance. The governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements.

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Since the last inspection, the school has developed good systems to monitor attendance, resulting in improving attendance rates. The curriculum has contributed more equitably to pupils' progress and their enjoyment of learning. Its greater focus on skills and regular opportunities to practise them across a range of subjects enable pupils to appreciate better the relevance of learning and to understand that skills are transferrable. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination for all groups is satisfactory rather than good because pupils make satisfactory progress. Communication between staff is good and is promoting more continuous learning, including between playgroup, Reception and Key Stage 1. It is also helpful in accelerating the learning of those pupils who spend part of their time in the unit and the rest in mainstream school.

Parents and carers are supportive of the school. Communication is regular and includes access to on-line information. The school seeks parents and carers' views regularly, including about their children's learning.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



21 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newbold Verdon Primary School, Leicester, LE9 9NG

During our recent visit, we enjoyed observing lessons and talking to you about what you learn. Thank you for your politeness and for sharing with us your thoughts about your school.

Your school is a satisfactory school. That means that you make satisfactory progress by the end of Year 6. You achieve average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, when teaching is regularly good, such as in the playgroup, Reception and the unit, you make good progress. You like learning through topics and being able to practise a range of skills. You feel safe in the school, which cares for you well. Many of you behave well all of the time. You learn and play happily with all of the pupils in the school. However, a few of you do not behave as well as you could in lessons and become restless.

The headteacher and staff know that you can reach higher standards and make quicker progress. I have asked them to help you to do this by making sure that:

- teaching is good throughout the school
- the work you are given in lessons is planned at just the right level to enable you to make good progress
- you are motivated in lessons, by teachers providing you with interesting activities
- there is a brisk pace to learning
- school leaders check the school's work regularly and in detail.

I hope that you will all help the staff to make these improvements by working hard and behaving well all of the time.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Blakelock
Lead Inspector

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