



Newnham Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102393
Local Authority Hillingdon
Inspection number 286359
Inspection date 8 December 2006
Reporting inspector Nicola Davies

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Newnham Avenue
School category	Community		Ruislip
Age range of pupils	7-11		HA4 9RW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01895671965
Number on roll (school)	304	Fax number	02088681391
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Jonathon Youngs
		Headteacher	Mr Martin Morgan
Date of previous school inspection	29 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger-than-average junior school in Ruislip which has expanded from two form to three form entry since its previous inspection. Around three-quarters of pupils are of White British heritage and a quarter are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Newnham Junior is a good school with outstanding features. Good teaching, an exciting curriculum and outstanding care enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress in their academic skills and excellent progress in their personal and social development. Pupils are extremely polite, well behaved and willing to take responsibility. At the same time, the wide-ranging opportunities which pupils have in lessons and through an excellent array of lunchtime and after school clubs, activities and visits foster very good attitudes to learning. These outstanding features ensure that pupils of all abilities leave the school as healthy and responsible young citizens, with the confidence to do well in the future.

In recent years, the school has been through a number of changes, including its expansion from a two form to a three form entry school. The good quality of education at the school has not been affected by these changes, due in good part, to the highly organised and effective leadership of the relatively new headteacher. He has developed an effective leadership team who share his enthusiasm for maintaining and improving the progress that pupils make both socially and academically. With the support of all staff, and the active involvement of pupils and parents, he has put very good systems in place to evaluate and further improve what the school offers. For example, discussions with parents and pupils led to a decision to develop the 'extra' activities and clubs. The hard work of teachers and other adults means that nearly all pupils now take part in, and learn from, these additional activities. Teachers' commitment to the well being of pupils is also evident in the school's comprehensive systems for setting personal and academic targets which involves both pupils and parents well. Parents recognise and value this outstanding care and support, commenting on how teachers give 'over and above' what is expected to the school and to their children.

The standards reached by pupils are consistently above average. Achievement is good overall. However, there is still room to further improve the progress which pupils' make. For example, the regular observations of lessons do not yet focus sharply enough on the progress that pupils make during each session. Similarly, the governing body is not yet fully involved in judging the school's performance. The fact that both of these points have already been identified by the school, along with its track record of successful improvements means that school leaders can be rightly confident that they have a good capacity to make further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress by ensuring that the monitoring of teaching is sharply focused on the quality of learning in lessons
- Increase the involvement of governors in self evaluation

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils join the school with generally above average standards. Good teaching and careful tracking of each pupil's progress means that they all make good gains in their learning. It also means this inclusive school ensures that different groups of pupils, for example, girls and boys, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities, make equally good progress. As a result, standards at the end of Year 6 are consistently higher than average and sometimes exceptionally so. A recent whole school focus on improving writing has led to a significant improvement in the most recent national tests in English. The school has rightly identified that aspects of progress in mathematics and science could be similarly improved. The school is in the process of refining its system of recording pupils' achievements to support the setting of challenging progress targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding personal development and well being, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, are at the heart of what this school sets out to achieve. Pupils enjoy school enormously and are happy to tell visitors why. Their understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle is exemplary and is supported by their enthusiastic participation in physical exercise both in lessons and through the clubs and activities that the school offers. For example, during the inspection, many pupils were engaged in a playtime challenge to hula hoop for up to ten minutes, followed by some energetic dancing at the school disco at the end of the day.

Pupils have excellent opportunities to take responsibility around the school and demonstrate an outstanding regard for others. They act as playground partners, school councillors, school house and sports captains, and cloakroom monitors and really enjoy keeping themselves and others safe, healthy and happy. For example, all pupils are well aware of what the school's elected School Nutrition Action Club (SNAC) considers to be a healthy lunch. Attendance is good and pupils do not tolerate racism and bullying. Every pupil has a chance to voice their opinions and have an impact on the school. The resulting harmony within the school community is impressive.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils see learning as fun and teachers as adults who help them when they need to improve their work. These excellent attitudes to learning are a result of the imaginative ways in which teachers engage pupils' interest and the very good relationships between pupils, teachers and other adults. As one pupil commented, 'All the TAs act just like

teachers'. Teachers explain to pupils what they are going to learn and pupils are kept involved in both assessing their progress and working collaboratively to help each other to learn.

Teachers plan well for the range of pupils in their classes. However on occasions, activities for pupils are not as well matched as they could be to their needs. Lessons are well planned to develop the speaking, listening and thinking skills of pupils in all subjects. Effective marking contributes well to pupils' good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum enthuses and informs pupils. Experimenting with forces, sewing Hannukah purses, developing spreadsheets and working out the most fuel efficient types of aircraft were just some of the activities which pupils were undertaking during the inspection. The curriculum includes a strong emphasis on both personal development and learning creatively through experience. For example, as part of their Victorian project, Year 6 pupils drag coal through a 'coal seam' recreated in the school's outbuildings. Photographs of pupils' many activities and special events line the walls of the school and the impact of such opportunities can be seen in the very good standards in the displays of pupils' work. There are good opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in their work and both pupils and teachers use technology, including the interactive whiteboards, with confidence. The curriculum is enhanced further by the outstanding range of lunchtime and after school clubs, visits and visitors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. As one pupil explained, 'This is the kindest school I have ever been to'. The school takes very good care to ensure that it helps all pupils to succeed and caters very well for the needs of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities or who are more vulnerable. Good links with specialist agencies help pupils get the support they need. This focus on effective care and support contributes to pupils' excellent personal development. For example, last year all pupils had an individual interview at the start of the year to ensure they were happy and doing well and to set individual targets. A second interview at the end of the year gave pupils an opportunity to share their progress, ideas and feelings.

Academic guidance is good and pupils benefit from short term individual targets which are shared with parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's good leadership and management have managed a period of rapid change very effectively. The popular headteacher has involved staff, parents and pupils

creatively in 'taking stock' of what the school offers. As a result, pupils feel that 'teachers don't decide everything' and staff similarly feel they have a real say in how things happen. Along with the new leadership team, the headteacher has developed an extremely thorough process for identifying areas which could be improved and sharing responsibility for ensuring that this becomes a reality. Regular lesson observations inform this process, although these need to focus more sharply on pupils' progress in lessons.

Governors have successfully managed aspects of change such as the extension of the school building and new arrangements for the school day. However, they are not involved closely enough in self evaluation to challenge the school to perform even better, particularly in terms of standards and achievement.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I really enjoyed meeting and talking to you when I visited your school. Thank you for the welcome you gave me, and a particular thanks to all those of you who volunteered to meet me. I was sorry I couldn't meet everyone who volunteered, but you'll be pleased to know that everyone I did talk to was very proud of the school and proud of all the things that you all achieve together.

When your head boy and girl showed me around, I saw the photographs of all the activities you do during and after school. I also saw some very interesting work happening in lessons I visited. This exciting curriculum, along with the way your teachers and the other adults at the school explain things and help you, are part of the reason why you enjoy school so much and do well. Another reason is that you all work together so well to take responsibility for making sure that all the pupils are happy. By the end of my visit I had lost count of all the things you do to help the school and each other. So well done.

Many of you struggled to think of things that could make the school better. This is probably because you have so many opportunities to get involved in suggesting changes and all the staff listen to what you have to say. You told me how organised your headteacher is and I could see this from the way he has developed a process to make sure that Newnham Junior keeps on getting better. You may have noticed the big flow chart he has of it on the wall in his office. There are two ways the school could make this 'school self evaluation' even better. One is to do with observing lessons and the other is about governors asking questions about how well Newnham Junior does in comparison to other schools all around the country.

You all looked as if you were having a really good time at the disco. I'm sorry I kept the headteacher and some of your teachers talking so they couldn't join in but I am sure there will be another chance for them to show you how well they can dance!

Best wishes

Nicola Davies

Lead inspector