

Newington Community Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135214
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	329057
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	359
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Harrison
Headteacher	Cliff Stokes
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Princess Margaret Avenue Newington Ramsgate CT12 6HX
Telephone number	01843 593412

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2009
Inspection number	329057

Fax number

01843 850323

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger-than-average primary school is the result of the recent amalgamation of Newington junior and infants schools. A newly built nursery, included in the school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision, is managed by the school's governing body. An independently run Children's Centre shares the school's site. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average and includes those with speech and language, emotional and social, and moderate learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Newington is a good school. Pupils are well cared for so they feel safe and secure and behave well. The school has developed strong, well-organised pastoral systems and effective partnerships with a wide range of agencies, which make a positive contribution to pupils' good personal development and well-being and help them overcome significant barriers to learning. The school provides good quality, relevant extended services and good support, which underpin its work with parents and pupils. The few parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire view the school as a happy, caring, well-ordered community and appreciate the opportunities the school provides to enrich the learning environment.

Pupils enter the school with the skills and knowledge below the levels expected for their age, and a large proportion have learning difficulties or disabilities. Through the school, standards and achievement have been improving because the quality of teaching and curriculum is good. The progress pupils make is monitored carefully and additional support is targeted well. As a result, pupils achieve well from their low starting points. Although standards remain just below average by the time they leave the school in Year 6, particularly in writing, standards are noticeably rising. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and participate enthusiastically. This is because there are high expectations, behaviour management is effective, relationships are good and routines well established. Teaching assistants and other adults are used well to support learning and lessons are planned carefully. However, not all activities, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, provide consistent challenge or opportunities for all pupils, particularly the more able, to help develop their learning. This is because while pupils' work is regularly marked it is not yet consistently sharp enough to help all pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve. Nevertheless, pupils benefit from having personal targets for improvement. These and the newly established assessment systems provide both pupils and teachers with a clear picture of individual expectation and progress.

The school's good range of extra-curricular activities as well as extended services make a positive contribution to the good curriculum. This all helps the school assist parents in taking advantage of the many opportunities and to develop their own skills that they need to support their child's learning. For the pupils, there is a clear focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills and a good range of enrichment opportunities which they enjoy.

The determination of the headteacher, well supported by the school's staff and governing body, is the driving force behind this good school. Opportunities are provided to enhance the skills and expertise of all staff, to remove barriers to learning and raise achievement. These improvements in achievement, as well as the strong commitment of the whole-school community to improve learning, demonstrate the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

On entry to the Nursery, children's skill levels are very low, particularly in speech and language, compared with those typical of children of their age. Good leadership ensures children's needs are identified quickly, enabling well-targeted support from an early start. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes are very well cared for and staff have high expectations of children's progress. They make good use of a creative range of activities to stimulate children's interests, with particular emphasis on personal, social and language development. Because of

the good organisation, fun teaching and personalised curriculum, children thoroughly enjoy their learning and behave well. Children's work is carefully assessed. This helps to ensure that appropriate planning is in place. Progress is good, particularly for those with learning difficulties. Nevertheless, by the end of Reception, the majority enter Year 1 still with skills below national expectations. Classrooms and outdoor areas provide a safe, well-organised and stimulating learning environment. However, not all pupils benefit from instant access to a computer in their classroom and consequently there are limited opportunities for children to develop their investigation or information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The transition from Nursery to Reception and on to Year 1 is very well planned and ensures that the curriculum is adapted to meet the learning needs of all children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics and accelerate progress by providing consistent challenge for pupils, especially for the more able.
- Ensure marking is consistent so that it informs pupils what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The good start made by many children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps to provide them with learning skills that enable them to continue to achieve well in relation to their low starting points. The progress of pupils throughout the school has accelerated this year, particularly in reading and mathematics, and is now good. Targets in English and mathematics are challenging and, although not always met, set high expectations, which has generated faster progress than last year. Although standards were below the national average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 in 2008, the school's assessment data and work in pupils' books indicate that a higher proportion of pupils at both key stages are on target to achieve closer to the national expectations in English and mathematics this year. Few pupils currently reach the higher levels in the national tests. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the effective support that they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being is good. Pupils say they are proud of their school, feel safe and, because they enjoy school, are keen to learn. They rightly appreciate the good support and care provided for them. Pupils are confident that there is an adult they can talk to if they are worried. As one child said 'It's a good school because they (the staff) look out for you and help you get on.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is reflected in all aspects of school life, particularly in celebration assemblies and in the wide range of rewards which help to promote the school's positive ethos, culture and good behaviour. The school successfully promotes respect and consideration for others. This has a marked impact on the way pupils relate to other pupils and adults, making the school a harmonious community. Members of the school council, head pupils and lunchtime 'buddies' all take their roles very seriously. Pupils are beginning to appreciate the diversity of the world around them and contribute to the wider community, enjoying opportunities to make links with other countries and raising funds for charitable events. Despite just below average standards in English and mathematics, pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good progress overall help to make a satisfactory contribution to preparing them for the next steps in their education. They have a

very good understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles, especially through the work that has been done by the school towards the Healthy School award. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance remains below average because a small minority of pupils do not attend as often as they should.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The majority of teaching seen was at least good and some was outstanding. This is because lessons are well planned and resourced, and there is good behaviour management and high expectations. Teachers use the skills and expertise of support staff well to enhance learning. Pupils are attentive in lessons and enthusiastic about their learning. Positive attitudes to work are fostered by small, well-planned steps in learning, particularly in mathematics, which help pupils to make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan activities that are varied and fun, based on a careful assessment of pupils' needs. Such activities were seen in a number of good English lessons where pupils were using practical 'kung-fu' hand gestures to help them remember how punctuation should be used. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, pupils' thinking skills were challenged by an investigation into the use of decimals using a calculator. However, there is inconsistency in the pace and challenge provided for the more able pupils. Planned 'creative breaks' between literacy and numeracy lessons provide a useful time for tasks such as 'brain gym' to help raise concentration levels for the next session.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is interesting, relevant and planned carefully to meet the wide-ranging needs of most pupils. However, some daily plans lacks sufficient detail to ensure the needs of the most able are fully met. Good resources and extensive accommodation all help to enhance a well-planned 'creative' curriculum. A range of recognised programmes have helped to bring about improvements in basic skills, as seen in the improvements in reading. Strong personal, social and health education provides many opportunities for pupils to improve their personal life skills and self-esteem, whilst also significantly improving behaviour and achievement. Specialist sport, music and modern foreign languages are used effectively to support learning. The school has extended the curriculum with a comprehensive range of additional out-of-hours activities and clubs, well attended by pupils. It is further enhanced by good enrichment activities such as practical science, gardening and the outdoor learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care and support provided for pupils is good and contributes significantly to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Procedures to protect children and ensure their safety are good. Vulnerable pupils and their families are provided with highly individualised support through the school's extended provision and good liaison with outside agencies. Any emerging issues for pupils who may have particular emotional or support needs are followed up quickly and rigorously by staff. Clear expectations are set for the academic progress pupils should make each year and this is regularly monitored by staff. Pupils have learning targets for improvement and are beginning to be involved in the assessment of their own learning. Pupils'

work is regularly marked; however, there is inconsistency in the quality of this marking so that not all pupils know how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management at all levels, including governors, are good. The headteacher provides a clear, widely shared vision for the school which is focused on high expectations, raising standards and reducing the many barriers the pupils face. Self-evaluation is systematic, honest and accurate, clearly identifying the school's strengths and areas for future development as well as informing staff training needs. Senior staff have made good use of pupil assessment information to set appropriately challenging whole-school targets which are clearly linked to raising standards. This has not yet been fully translated into consistently individualised marking or the highest levels of challenge for the more able. The school provides opportunities for all staff to develop their leadership and management roles by providing regular opportunities to monitor the quality of work through lesson observations and work sampling. The school has developed satisfactory provision for local, national and global development within its community cohesion policy, although it is acknowledged that there is the need to provide further opportunities for pupils to develop a wider understanding of the world.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Newington Community Primary School, Ramsgate CT12 6HX

Thank you very much for such a friendly welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We really enjoyed spending time with you and talking to you. You told us that Newington is a good school and that you really like coming to school because you get on well together and enjoy the things the school plans for you. We agree.

You go to a good school where most of you work hard and make good progress. We can see that by the time you leave in Year 6, standards are rising and are broadly similar to those expected for your age. We can also see these are getting better each year. The headteacher and staff work hard to make Newington a special place where everyone feels safe, secure and well cared for. You are taught well and your teachers plan your lessons carefully to help you learn. Those of you who find learning difficult get lots of help. You behave well and have a positive attitude towards your school work.

Your headteacher, teachers and helpers and the school governors lead your school very well. We have asked your teachers to do these two things to make Newington even better:

- to help everyone to improve standards in reading, writing and mathematics more quickly but especially for those who are capable of gaining higher levels
- to make sure that in your books, each one of you knows very clearly how to recognise what you need to do to improve your work.

You can help by always trying your best and by talking to your teacher about how to improve your work.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Forbes

Lead Inspector