

Newtown Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 116336 |
| Local Authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 326363 |
| Inspection dates | 10-11 March 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Janet Sinclair |

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

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| Type of School | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 411 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Jane Wallington |
| Headteacher | Mr Matthew Prince |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 October 2005 |
| School address | Queen's Road Gosport PO12 1JD |
| Telephone number | 02392 584048 |
| Fax number | 02392 587822 |

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|--------------------|------------------|
| Age group | 4-11 |
| Inspection Date(s) | 10-11 March 2009 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school's Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two Reception classes. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is slightly above average. However, the proportion varies significantly between year groups. These pupils' needs include moderate learning and speech and communication difficulties. Pupils are mainly White British. A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. There is an onsite breakfast and after school club run by the school. The school has Enhanced Healthy Schools status and Investors in People accreditation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. However, the headteacher has ensured an excellent ethos where the care of pupils is paramount. As a result, pupils' personal development is outstanding and this is evident in some happy smiling faces and pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Parents are very pleased with what the school provides. As one parent commented, 'There is a great atmosphere in the school. The level of support and friendship is enormous. An extremely professional yet fun learning place'.

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. They thoroughly enjoy all that is on offer and so fully develop their confidence and independence. They make good progress across the areas of learning so that most meet the goals expected of them on entry to Year 1.

Standards are in line with the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory. Although there has been some unsatisfactory achievement in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2, the school has worked hard to address this through more effective tracking, the introduction of linking sounds and letters, a new reading scheme and some local authority support for mathematics. These initiatives are showing positive outcomes in terms of pupils' progress. Parents are already noticing its impact in their children's improved reading skills. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers organise and manage lessons well, and use a range of strategies that engage the interest of pupils. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons, behave very well and work hard. However, some lessons are not challenging enough. Also, pupils do not always have a clear idea of what they are expected to learn because some objectives for learning are insufficiently precise so pupils do not make as much progress as they might. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning through their effective work with small groups of pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties.

There is a wide range of visits, visitors and special events as well as opportunities for residential visits, which enhance the school's good curriculum and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. The school is a hive of activity all day including the very good breakfast and after school clubs, which children thoroughly enjoy and which also provide considerable support for working families. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community through, for example, making and selling cakes at break time in support of 'Red Nose Day' charities. Pupils thrive within the very supportive atmosphere of the school. Vulnerable pupils are particularly well supported so that they can participate fully in all the school provides. Pupils' progress is now monitored systematically, ensuring that they get effective support if needed. This is helping to accelerate rates of progress. However, not all pupils have individual targets for their learning, and marking is inconsistent, so this limits pupils' involvement in improving their work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. There is a detailed school improvement plan and regular monitoring of teaching and learning. Monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure good improvement in academic achievement or teaching quality. However, there is a good commitment to improvement by all staff and particularly the headteacher and his new deputy headteacher, as seen in the determined way they have tackled the underachievement. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The very good induction process and supportive and caring atmosphere help children to settle well into school routines. Children start with a range of skills and abilities, which are mainly below typical expectations, particularly in writing and linking sounds and letters. The school is addressing these weaknesses and is accelerating children's progress in this area. Teaching is effective because teachers organise a range of child-chosen and teacher-directed activities, which fully engage children and promote effective learning. For example, several groups of children enjoyed re-enacting and retelling stories such as, 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. This was linked well to problem-solving work involving caterpillars of different lengths and patterns. However, teachers are still developing provision for the ongoing activities across the areas of learning in order to further promote children's learning. Regular observations take place and these are used well to assess and track children's progress and match work to their individual needs. Although leadership is satisfactory

overall, it is not clearly devolved and this hampers the effective development of new initiatives. The few children in Reception who attend the after school club thoroughly enjoy the many activities on offer and the friendly atmosphere.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement overall, but particularly in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2, by ensuring greater challenge in lessons and consistency in setting clear and precise objectives for learning.
- Build on the existing good practice to ensure all pupils are given more specific guidance on how to improve their work and are involved in setting targets for their learning.
- Accelerate pupils' rates of progress by ensuring all staff with leadership and management responsibilities are rigorous in their monitoring of achievement and standards.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Over time, standards in Year 2 have been average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents satisfactory progress for these pupils based on their prior attainment. Progress in the current Year 2 is accelerating due to improved provision and more focused teaching. Good attention is being given to challenging the more able through small group work aimed at their specific needs.

At Key Stage 2, although standards have remained broadly average at the end of Year 6, there has been a declining picture in terms of pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics. This is mainly due to weaknesses in provision, which are now being successfully addressed. This year in Year 6, although there is a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, including those with a statement of special educational need, an improving picture exists in terms of their achievement. However, some residual underachievement remains in this year group. Progress across the rest of Key Stage 2 is broadly satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress towards the specific targets set for them due to the additional support they get. In all other respects, their progress is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school and respond outstandingly well to the range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences that are offered. They show their understanding of these aspects through, for example, their very positive and thoughtful responses to spiritual and moral issues presented in assemblies. Pupils treat each other with great consideration and respect and are very well behaved both in lessons and around the school. A local civic leader described pupils' behaviour and manners at a recent formal civic ceremony as 'exemplary'.

The effect of the Healthy School Award is seen in the pupils' very good understanding of the importance of staying safe and healthy, for example through taking regular exercise, using tools safely in design and technology, and becoming qualified first aiders. They make an excellent contribution to the community through, for example, visiting a local care home, working with parents and local residents to plant trees on the school field and mini-enterprise projects to raise funds for the people of Mikindani in Tanzania. Although attendance is average, most pupils attend regularly.

Pupils' sound progress in acquiring basic skills, their effective skills in speaking and listening as well as the manner in which they embrace the opportunities for leadership and teamwork, all prepare them well for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers organise lessons well and have good relationships with pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy lessons and are keen and motivated to learn. A strength of the teaching is the good opportunities provided for speaking and listening through the use of 'talk partners' and explaining the strategies used in solving mathematical problems. As a result, pupils are confident in the use of spoken language. Not all staff match work well to their pupils' individual needs. Although lessons are well planned, teachers do not always ensure learning objectives are clear and precise or that work is sufficiently challenging, and this hinders overall progress. Also, work is sometimes unfinished. This detracts from giving pupils a sense of accomplishment, which is at odds with the general care teachers take in planning and organising the work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the well-planned activities on offer and benefit, as a parent stated, from 'a stimulating curriculum which engages them'. Pupils enjoy learning through topics that involve different subjects. They are also benefiting from the strong focus on literacy and more recently the local authority support for mathematics. Literacy provision is further enhanced by the school's very effective librarian who provides a range of events to promote pupils' enjoyment of books. There is good attention to health and safety through, for example, the personal, social and health education programme and the 'Enhanced Healthy Schools' award. The after school and lunchtime clubs are very popular, as are the ambitious drama productions. The computer suite ensures skills are learnt in discrete lessons. However, there are insufficient computers to support whole-class learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is outstanding. Superb support is provided for vulnerable pupils and their families. The school links well with a large number of outside agencies to ensure pupils get effective support. Pupils with learning or personal difficulties are quickly identified and given support. The corridors and library areas actually buzz with activity and enjoyment as pupils work with an adult in small groups. The school has worked hard to improve the poor attendance of a small minority. Procedures to safeguard pupils' well-being, health and safety are robust, regularly reviewed and well managed. Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will take action should any problems arise. The progress of pupils is now tracked well and is used to ensure pupils not making enough progress are given effective support. Consequently, pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, progress satisfactorily. However, target setting and marking are not fully consistent and this slows progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

School leaders have established a very positive climate for learning. This has resulted in pupils' good attitudes to their work, and to very secure relationships between teachers and pupils. Senior staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas to develop. They have taken effective action to address weaknesses in pupils' achievement through rigorous tracking and effective interventions. As a result, improvements are beginning to take place, for example, in reading skills.

The satisfactory school improvement plan, although detailed, does not always have clearly measurable indicators of success against which the school can judge the impact of its work. This makes it difficult to ensure accountability from senior and subject leaders or help governors monitor the work of the school accurately in order to improve provision. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and has ensured that teaching is at least satisfactory. However, its scope is narrow and insufficiently evaluative to promote effective improvements in teaching. The governing body is supportive of the school and in many respects holds the school accountable for its actions but it does not always challenge the school sufficiently as a critical friend.

Community cohesion is promoted well through the school's close involvement in the church, in local events and in hosting breakfast and after school clubs. Links with the global community are being developed through communication with a school in Africa and through celebrating the different cultures represented within the school.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

| | |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|--|---|
| 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 is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are the 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? | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 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 |

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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest 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? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 3 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| 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



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

24 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newtown Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Gosport, PO12 1JD

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school, especially as you were so friendly and helpful. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and finding out how much you enjoy the many activities your school provides and the opportunities you get to be fully involved. We hope your 'Red Nose Day' activities went well.

Your school is a satisfactory school overall but it has some strong features.

Here are some things the school does well.

- You make good progress in the Reception classes because staff ensure you have a wide range of interesting activities to engage you.
- Your headteacher and all the staff take extremely good care of you and this ensures your personal development is excellent.
- You enjoy taking on responsibilities and make a very good contribution to the school and wider community through your many fundraising activities.
- Your school provides a good range of school productions, visits, and visitors as well as opportunities for gardening and sports which you thoroughly enjoy.

Every school has something it could do better, so this is what we have asked your school to do to help you learn even more.

- Ensure that lessons in writing and mathematics tell you exactly what you have to learn, and challenge you fully so that you make better progress.
- Ensure you are more fully involved in setting your targets and in improving your work for English and mathematics, so your work gets even better.
- All leaders need to check that the things that need to be improved to help you make better progress are clearly stated.

With very best wishes.

Yours faithfully

Janet Sinclair
Lead Inspector