

Newbarns Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112244
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	310826
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	459
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Goddard
Headteacher	Mrs Jill Byrne
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2004
School address	Rising Side Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria LA13 9ET
Telephone number	01229 894615
Fax number	01229 894616

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards in the Foundation Stage and both key stages; teaching and learning and the quality of guidance for pupils; attitudes, behaviour and personal development; the quality of the curriculum in meeting all needs; health and safety; care for pupils and the impact of leaders and managers on the performance of the school. Evidence was gathered from: observations; assessment data; pupils' completed work; parents' replies to the questionnaires and discussions with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school in a suburb to the north of Barrow-in-Furness. Pupils come from a wide area and very mixed backgrounds; the proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average in most year groups. Newbarns is designated as an Extended Care School. Care sessions out of school time are scheduled to begin in the new academic year and will run in conjunction with the new children's centre.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Newbarns Primary is an outstanding school that provides excellent value for money. It has a deservedly high reputation and places are in great demand. Adults and pupils show strong commitment to the school motto, 'Only our best is good enough'. Parents have exceptionally positive views of the school. Through their returned questionnaires they commend the teachers who, they say, 'focus on the well-being of the pupils and engage them in an exciting way.' Parents also praise 'the high standards in achievement and discipline' and 'the wonderful atmosphere and organisation'. Excellent links with other schools and agencies bring substantial benefits to pupils' learning and personal development. For example, a joint venture provides challenges for gifted and talented pupils, and outside specialists extend provision for physical education and sport.

Standards are significantly above average by Year 6. Pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils' development on entry to Year 1 is just below that usually seen. They make excellent progress through Key Stage 1 so that by the end of Year 2 standards are average. A well embedded programme for teaching sounds and letters provides an excellent foundation for reading and writing. During Key Stage 2, progress accelerates further. A good proportion of pupils exceed the standards expected by the end of Year 6 because of the outstanding progress they make as they move through the school. The provision for the large number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a major strength of the school and enables them to progress exceptionally well. A series of special programmes and additional support by expertly trained teaching assistants, together with carefully planned work, ensures pupils have full access to all lessons. Boys and girls learn equally well because teachers plan lessons to cater for different interests. More able pupils have work that extends their abilities and talents in class, and they benefit from extra provision such as the 'Challenge' or 'Saturday' clubs.

Pupils' learning is outstanding because they are extremely well taught. Individual progress is assessed on a very regular basis. The information is used exceptionally well to ensure, for example, that lessons promote a fast pace to learning and exacting challenges for the more able. Where pupils' progress is not meeting teachers' very high expectations, special catch-up programmes are introduced. This is an important factor underpinning pupils' excellent progress. The quality of marking is exceptional. Pupils constantly evaluate their own progress and make suggestions for improvement. Using information from both processes, teachers devise very useful individual guidance to help pupils improve their work. This helps to boost progress and leads to excellent skills of independent learning. The school actively encourages and involves parents in their children's learning. Parents support the homework programme very well.

The outstanding curriculum provides an excellent balance between creative, physical and academic work. It fully extends oral, practical and problem-solving skills. Exceptionally good links between subjects give pupils extensive opportunities to apply their literacy, numeracy and computer skills. Frequent opportunities for independent study and research permeate the curriculum. As a result, pupils develop a very broad and secure platform for the next stage of education. There is excellent enhancement for learning through visits, visitors to school and themed events, such as the 'Victorian day'. Pupils take very good advantage of many school clubs. These provide excellent opportunities for exercise, competitive sport and to develop individual talents and interests.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. They are supported very well by an excellent programme of personal, health, social and citizenship education. The excellent promotion of personal values throughout school, together with highly valued rewards, such as 'good citizen', promotes thoughtful actions and kind deeds. The programme for personal education gives pupils varied and valuable opportunities to learn about cultural richness and diversity. Attendance is well above average. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is exemplary. Older pupils demonstrate maturity, very good self-discipline and a strong work ethic. They are very well equipped for life beyond primary school.

The standard of care is excellent. Support for pupils with additional needs is outstanding. Special equipment, such as auditory aids and a sensory room are used to good effect and support pupils well. Extra sessions for pupils with emotional difficulties help them develop positive relationships, good communication skills and cope with their feelings. This ensures the systematic eradication of barriers to learning and a happy, harmonious school community. Attention to health and safety issues is meticulous; measures for safeguarding pupils are rigorous. Pupils say they feel totally safe and free from bullying. Their understanding of healthy living is excellent and, through their very active council, pupils contribute to many aspects of school life, such as having a say in the content of lunchtime menus. Older pupils' valuable contributions include managing playtime equipment and games, and raising awareness of dangers on the roads.

The headteacher's leadership is excellent. She is held in great esteem by pupils, staff, governors and parents. With the exceptionally supportive assistant headteachers, she promotes strong teamwork among the very talented and hard-working staff. The inviting learning environment, good quality resources, highly efficient administration and excellent maintenance reflects the shared vision of excellence. There is no complacency in this outstanding school. Constant and rigorous monitoring of the school's performance ensures early identification of potential problems. Improvement planning provides a clear agenda for action so the school is constantly moving forwards. The excellent range of strengths in the previous inspection report has been successfully maintained and further developments made, such as the improvement in attainment in science. The school's capacity to maintain its outstanding record of success is excellent. Governance is excellent. Governors' expertise and active and critical leadership and management ensure pupils' interests are paramount. All statutory requirements are met.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

When children enter the Nursery, their development is well below that typical for their age. Children make an excellent start to their education in this and the Reception class and develop a broad foundation for later work. Teaching in small adult-led groups develops specific skills and areas of knowledge. An interesting selection of 'free choice' activities encourages children to practise and consolidate their learning. They make excellent progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children's attitudes, early reading, understanding of number and physical skills broadly meet expectations. In other areas of learning, development is just below expectations. Children who start school with difficulties in speaking and social skills make great strides in their development. The vast majority move into Year 1 as confident speakers and learners.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no major key issues for action.
- The school development plan highlights some minor areas for improvement and staff are currently working to address these.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

12 March 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Newbarns Primary School, Cumbria. LA13 9ET

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my day and I appreciated all the help you gave me and the interesting conversations we had. In return, I would like to tell you what I found out.

Newbarns Primary is an outstanding school where everyone follows the motto, 'Only our best is good enough'. Some of the things that impressed me most were your excellent behaviour and the amazing range of lessons and activities you have. You get on extremely well together and take excellent care of each other. You are a credit to your families and your school. Your council members ensure that your views are known and are good at putting your case forward. It is good to see how well you care for the environment through your eco-council. I also think you do a good job in donating to charities, which shows that you care about those who are less fortunate in the world.

The school is a safe and happy place, and you are confident that, 'bullying does not happen'. You said that the best points about your school were the great selection of books, lots of opportunities for exercise and that you are allowed to develop your own interests. I agree with the person who said, 'We learn a lot and it's fun'. Please thank your parents for sending lots of replies to the questionnaire. They know how much you enjoy school and are extremely pleased with what it offers.

You are keen to learn and take very good notice of the advice that your school gives you. Well done, this is helping you to make excellent progress. Your school is always looking for new ideas to stretch your abilities and talents. I hope you continue to relish the challenges in your lessons and enjoy continued success at the school.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations I had and for letting me share your day. Both you and the staff can be tremendously proud of your exciting school. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector