

Newbold Verdon Primary School and Community Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119942
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313456
Inspection dates	11–12 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Frances Gillam

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	187
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	Mel Suart
Headteacher	Aleksander Grubisic
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dragon Lane Newbold Verdon Leicester LE9 9NG
Telephone number	01455 822362

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	11–12 February 2009
Inspection number	313456

Fax number

01455 824913

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this average-sized primary school are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who need extra support with their learning is well above the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school has a special educational needs resource unit that caters for 15 pupils with autism. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class and the governors provide childcare for 22 three-year-olds in the Honeysuckle Playgroup.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Newbold Verdon Primary is a good school. Pupils' personal development and well-being and the level of care, guidance and support they receive are outstanding. This is why pupils quickly grow in confidence and become keen learners by Year 6. Good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and good teaching in Years 3 to 6 enable pupils to achieve well and reach average standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) develop well. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to research information and to record and present their work in different ways. Together with the pupils' very good attitudes and confidence in literacy and numeracy, these skills help to prepare pupils well for the future. Pupils' progress is not as rapid in Years 1 and 2 as it is in other year groups. Although satisfactory overall, pupils' learning does not always build well enough on the good progress children make in the Reception class. This is especially true for the more able pupils, who are not always challenged to do their best.

Parents are right to have confidence that the school will care very well for their children. Pupils who need extra help with their work or who have complex learning difficulties do extremely well because staff are quick to respond to their needs. Learning support staff encourage these pupils to 'have a go' and this helps to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils from the unit have a tailor-made curriculum that meets their needs extremely well. As a result, they make outstanding progress in relation to their learning goals. Staff and pupils in the main school work closely with colleagues and children in the unit. The empathy and care pupils show towards children in the unit is exceptional.

Pupils behave well and many enjoy school. They especially like the range of exciting clubs outside normal lessons that successfully support the good curriculum. Pupils make very sensible choices about what they eat and participation rates in sporting events are high. This is because pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and staff make sure they regularly remind pupils about how to keep safe. Consequently, pupils play and work together well, with due regard for their own and others' safety. Pupils make a very good contribution to the local and wider community. They eagerly support good causes such as the local homeless shelter and a school in Uganda.

Good systems to evaluate the school's work provide governors and staff with a clear idea of how well the school is doing. Senior leaders use this information well to drive improvements and to set challenging targets. Provision in the unit has improved greatly; it is now outstanding, and the progress of more able pupils in science is now good. These features show that leadership and management are good and that the school has a good capacity to improve further. The action the school takes to make changes for the better is usually successful. However, recently senior leaders have introduced ways to make the curriculum more appealing for pupils but with mixed results. In some year groups, teachers expertly link subjects together to develop exciting topics for the pupils to learn. This not only grabs the pupils' interest but it also makes effective use of the time for learning. As yet, this work is not established firmly in all classes. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in subjects such as history and geography, nor do these pupils have enough good opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning in these and other subjects.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well in the Honeysuckle Playgroup. As children move into the Reception Year, not all will reach the expected level for their age. Yet this represents good progress from the children's low starting points. Children continue to do well and by the time they are ready to move into Year 1, most are close to attaining the expected goals for their age. In both the Playgroup and Reception Year, adults devote close attention to the needs of individual children. They spend time engaging children in talk. This strengthens children's vocabulary and helps to develop their understanding across all the areas of learning. Staff and children enjoy warm and positive relationships and this fosters in children a strong sense of security. Staff use the indoor and outdoor environment well to provide activities that spark the children's interest and raise their aspirations. For example, budding architects eagerly drew building plans and hardworking builders dug out the footings for the new houses! Staff in the Playgroup and Reception Year work together well. The strong understanding of how young children develop and learn shows in the way adults observe and assess children's achievements. They then use this information successfully to plan the next steps in learning. Work is underway to update the arrangements for tracking children's progress. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage acknowledges this work is yet to be embedded fully.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers build effectively on the good start in the Reception Year so that pupils in Key Stage 1 make better progress, especially the more able pupils.
- Ensure that the topic approach to curriculum planning provides pupils with better opportunities to improve their learning across a range of subjects and to use their literacy and numeracy skills effectively to support this learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Children do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. While not all children reach the goals expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year, their progress is good given their starting points. Standards are below average by Year 2; pupils' progress is satisfactory. Progress is no better than this because activities, particularly at the start of Key Stage 1, do not always challenge and engage the more able pupils. This sometimes hinders the progress these pupils make. In the rest of the school, the teachers' strong and effective response in helping pupils reach challenging targets has lifted the quality of the pupils' work and enabled a good rate of progress in literacy, numeracy and science. Standards are broadly average by Year 6. Strategies to support pupils who struggle with their work and for those pupils in the unit are very well focused. This has a beneficial impact on the achievement of these pupils, who make outstanding progress in meeting their learning and personal goals.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Outstanding development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding helps pupils to respect the views and feelings of others. Pupils show a high level of concern for the well-being of others and they have a very strong community awareness. These features show

in their sensible and safe behaviour and their eagerness to help others less fortunate than themselves. To keep fit and healthy, pupils make excellent choices about their diet and take part enthusiastically in a wide range of physical activity. Pupils enjoy school; they attend regularly and behave well. This helps to make the school a happy and friendly place to be. Pupils from the unit play an active part in the life of the school. They participate in a variety of lessons with pupils in the main school and this involvement helps all pupils to build constructive relationships. The pupils' good academic progress and very positive attitudes towards their learning help to prepare them well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Constructive relationships between adults and pupils are built on a firm foundation of mutual trust and respect. Pupils feel their efforts are valued. This makes the pupils try hard and helps them to do well in their work. Staff in the unit provide excellent one-to-one support for pupils. Their timely and sensitive help ensures that these pupils progress extremely well towards their individual targets. Within the main school, learning support assistants play an important role in helping pupils who sometimes struggle with their work. The staff's very effective support promotes a strong 'have a go' culture. As a result, these pupils respond positively and do very well in their work. Most teachers respond well to whole-school plans to improve pupils' learning. They make sure that lessons have a good balance between pupils listening, sharing their ideas and finding things out for themselves. However, in some lessons in Key Stage 1, the work is sometimes too easy for the more able pupils. As a result, these pupils do not always do as well as they can.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' ICT, literacy and numeracy skills; this helps the pupils to make good progress. However, the full force of this good work is not yet supporting fully pupils' learning in other subjects. This is because teachers do not always make useful links between subjects to develop topics that stimulate and excite the pupils. Where this work is effective, as in Years 5 and 6, pupils talk very enthusiastically about their learning. They also make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills, for example, to write historical accounts and to determine how they will use and interpret data in science. Within the unit, staff provide each pupil with a personalised curriculum that stimulates pupils' interests and matches their individual needs very well. Pupils really enjoy the good range of clubs, visits and visitors the school offers them, all of which contribute successfully to pupils' achievements and enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents are right to feel that their children are very well looked after. The comment of one parent sums up the views held by many: 'I consider myself very lucky that my son attends Newbold Verdon. I know the staff look after my child very well.' The school's systems for safeguarding pupils are robust. They ensure that the school is a safe place to be. Staff have the best interests of pupils at heart, including those in the unit, and they routinely remind

pupils of how to stay safe and free from harm. Guidance for pupils' academic progress is strong and pupils make very good use of the advice and targets teachers give to them. The pupils particularly enjoy the challenge the targets provide. They can see the improvements in their work and get a great sense of success as a result.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Parents have a good deal of confidence that the school will do the best for their children. Senior leaders regularly canvas pupils and their parents about how aspects of the school's work can be improved. This, together with the links made in the immediate and wider locality, contributes well to good relationships and community cohesion. Close links with outside agencies also support the school's work and contributes well to the outstanding progress pupils in the unit, and those within school with learning difficulties, make. Governors are well informed and so are well placed to hold the school to account for its effectiveness. Challenging targets are securing good improvement in the national test results for eleven-year-olds but senior leaders acknowledge that inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 are slowing the progress that some more able pupils make.

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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	Yes
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	1

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?	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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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 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?	1

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	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

13 February 2009

Dear Pupils

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

Thank you very much for making the inspection team feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you, visiting some of your lessons and hearing about all the exciting things you do.

You have a good school. The people in charge and your teachers do a good job in helping you to learn and to achieve well in your work.

Here are some of the things we found were especially good about your school.

- Children in the unit and those who sometimes struggle with their work do very well because of the excellent help they receive.
- You are extremely good at making sure you grow up fit and healthy because you eat sensibly and take plenty of exercise.
- You look out for each other and you are very good at helping others.
- You listen to and respect other people's views and beliefs.
- Your behaviour is good and this helps to make your school a friendly and happy place to be.
- You are very well cared for by all the grown-ups in your school and this makes you feel safe and secure.

We have asked the people in charge and your teachers to work together on two things.

- To make sure all of you make good progress, especially the more able pupils in Key Stage 1.
- To make sure that your topic work gives you better opportunities to improve your learning in different subjects and that you get good chances to use your reading, writing and numeracy skills to help you with this work.

Keep up the good work!

Yours sincerely

Fran Gillam

Lead inspector