

Newbrough Church of England First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122298
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	292362
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Susan Steven
Headteacher	Mr John Moore
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2002
School address	Fourstones Hexham Northumberland NE47 5AQ
Telephone number	01434 674284
Fax number	01434 674284

Age group	3–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Newbrough is a small village school in rural Northumberland. It is part of the West Tyne Schools' Federation with five other schools. This provides additional flexibility and resources to support provision. All pupils are from a White British background and no pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is half the national average though the proportion of pupils with a statement of educational need is just under average. Although the attainment on entry is broadly average, the locality the school serves contains some disadvantage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Newbrough Church of England First School is an outstanding school. It is a much valued resource, described by one parent as: 'a vital focus for a dispersed rural community'. The school enjoys extremely high levels of support and confidence from parents and the community. Another parent added: 'my child has been given the best possible start to her school life'. The excellent leadership, exceptional achievement and the high quality of care and personal development are outstanding features. Pupils feel safe, are eager to learn and behave exceptionally well.

Pupils arrive at school with an average range of skills. As a result of stimulating, well thought out and challenging teaching, achievement is very high. Pupils' desire to learn makes sure consistently high standards are reached in all subjects. The excellent provision in the Foundation Stage provides all children with crucial personal and language skills, which allow speedy progress in all areas of learning. By the end of Year 2, teachers' assessments reveal a pattern of high achievement in reading, writing and mathematics with standards well above average. This pattern is reflected in all subjects with strengths in science, music, art and drama. The teaching is outstanding and, as a result, pupils sustain their high level of achievement and attain well above average standards throughout the school. Assessment is very thorough and monitors the progress of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, exceptionally well. Pupils receive well focused guidance which allows them to recognise how they can improve their work. Inspired approaches to self-assessment are successfully used in drama, although other lessons do not always include opportunities for pupils to assess the quality of their own work.

The headteacher and governors promote an explicit philosophy, rooted in Christian values, that every child matters in this school. They make certain that, through an extremely rich curriculum combined with sensitive and well directed care and support, pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures they become mature, caring, and sensitive and respectful to others. Pupils are considerate and helpful and value the benefits of a safe and healthy lifestyle. In addition, they take great pride in their contributions to improvements in school life and routines.

The governors, headteacher and staff work energetically to ensure that the exciting vision for the school as a village resource, part of an effective wider federation of schools, is realised. The imaginative acquisition of funding and the efficient use of federation resources, together with high achievement show that the school provides very good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the participation of pupils in assessing their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Children enter Nursery with broadly average skills and make very good progress. They acquire confidence and develop good listening and speaking skills which prepare them well for learning. By the time they enter Year 1 all pupils are working beyond the level expected of them for their age. Results in the 2006 national assessments are exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics with girls and boys doing equally well. The proportion of pupils who reach the highest levels exceeds national averages.

By the time pupils leave school, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average. Achievement in creative arts and science is also exceptionally high. The school's very careful monitoring and tracking of pupils' performance ensure that individual needs and talents are quickly identified and appropriate action taken. As a consequence, able and talented pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good and sometimes better progress as a result of skilled support. This has been a consistent pattern of pupils' performance over a number of years.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils respond positively to opportunities to involve themselves in school life, for example routinely welcoming visitors and guests to school and adding their views in funding bids and the design of new outdoor areas. Members of the school council are very proud of the contributions they make. There are strong links with the village, and, through the church, pupils play a full part in celebrations, for example harvest festival and the carol service. Pupils are regularly involved in fundraising for charities and demonstrate a high level of cooperation and teamwork. Added to their well-developed skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), this ensures they are well prepared for later study and work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are very good and often outstanding. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with teachers and support staff. Their keenness to learn is readily captured and pupils work with a clear focus and energy in lessons. In outstanding lessons, pupils are challenged by teachers to think at every possible moment. In the Foundation Stage, emphasis on the development of communication skills develops early confidence to respond to thought-provoking activities. This paves the way for successful writing. Teachers know the pupils very well and all staff understand the needs of each pupil. As a consequence, work is well matched to need and pupils learn quickly as they move through school. Support staff work very effectively with individuals and small groups to accelerate their learning. Questioning is well focused and encourages pupils of all abilities to think for themselves. More able pupils are consistently challenged to extend higher level thinking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding curriculum and takes full advantage of specialist teaching that the Federation has to offer. Excellent enrichment activities extend pupils' learning experiences and nurture their personal development very well. There is a high level of participation in after-school clubs, for example in the broad sports development programme. Children in the Foundation Stage learn really well through first-hand experience despite current limited outdoor provision. Links with local arts centres have brought an extra dimension and strength to the curriculum, for example the Indian music and drama workshop. The thoughtful development of ICT to enhance the quality of pupils' work is an emerging strength. Matching

the curriculum to individual needs is a strong point as planning combines classwork, small group and individual learning very well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for children are excellent. Staff provide safe and secure environments for pupils and a calm, relaxed atmosphere permeates the school. All aspects of school life reflect a total commitment to high quality care and sensitivity to the pupils' needs, for example the early identification of need as pupils start school. This is highly valued by parents.

Procedures to safeguard children, including routines for child protection and health and safety are thorough and well understood by staff. Excellent links with outside agencies and parents add to the positive climate of support. The pupils are quick to confirm the quality of school life. They have no qualms approaching staff if they have any worries or concerns. The progress of all pupils is closely monitored and tracking and target setting routines are strengths.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The excellent leadership and management of the school ensure that the school is constantly moving forward with vision and purpose. The headteacher makes certain the many significant improvements to the school add to a climate in which all pupils can thrive, for example the expansion of ICT resources and the acquisition of farmland to develop outdoor learning, play and sport facilities. Everyone at the school is focused on improving and extending the quality of education. This is reflected in the high level of pupils' enjoyment and achievement.

Governance of the school and the contribution of the chair of governors are outstanding. The school's own evaluation of its provision and outcomes for the pupils is reliable and accurate. The school has taken all the necessary steps to promote improvement since the last inspection and the capacity for further improvement is very good.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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 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	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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

Newbrough Church of England First School

Fourstones

Hexham

Northumberland

NE47 5AQ

22 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the very friendly welcome to your school and for being so polite and helpful when you met me. I thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking with your staff and joining you in lessons, in the dining hall and assembly.

What I most liked about your school was:

- the exceptional way which the staff are improving the school for your benefit
- the way you enjoy your lessons, are eager to learn and are determined to attend school every day
- the way your teachers make sure you do as well as you can
- your excellent behaviour and the way Mr Moore and all the staff make sure your behaviour is recognised and rewarded
- the high quality of care and support of all staff to help you learn, and listen to any worries and concerns you may have.

Your parents think that this is an excellent school and I agree. Nevertheless, I think that you could be even more involved in judging the quality of your work in lessons to help you do even better.

I hope that you will continue to work as hard as you can and do as well as you can.

I wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Petts

Lead inspector