

Northwick Manor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135523
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	341660
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	595
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Stuart Currie
Headteacher	Miss Sian Williams
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. A majority of the time was spent looking at learning, including pupils' work. Twenty five lessons and all classes were observed; three groups of pupils were interviewed. The chair of governors was interviewed and meetings were held with staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at local authority reports, information about pupils' progress, staff and pupil surveys and safeguarding procedures. The inspection team analysed 162 responses to parent and carer questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of provision on progress in pupils' writing
- the use of assessment to support progress especially for more able pupils
- the impact of leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage on children's overall progress and the quality of provision
- how well school leaders have secured improvements to weaknesses in progress and teaching.

Information about the school

Northwick Manor is a large primary school where most pupils are White British and a few are from other ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of three Reception classes. The school was opened in September 2008 as an amalgamation of an infant and junior school. The headteacher was appointed at that time. The deputy headteacher has been in post since January 2010. At the time of the inspection there was considerable building work taking place to develop the school facilities and site.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Northwick Manor is a delightful school where pupils achieve well within a happy school community. Their behaviour is outstanding, especially in the way they work hard and value learning. As one pupil typically stated, 'I am at a great school and I love it.' Children enter the school with attainment slightly above that expected for their age. They make good progress in all subjects and, by the time pupils leave Year 6, their attainment is above average and well above average in mathematics.

Progress varies and, although good overall, in some year groups progress in writing is satisfactory. The school has begun to encourage pupils to talk more about writing and plan writing tasks together but this is not fully embedded in the practice of all teachers. It is recognised that opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing strategies and sharing their ideas about the teaching of writing have not been sufficiently effective in some groups. There is skilled support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and they also make good progress. All pupils, including those experiencing particular difficulties, are exceptionally well cared for. One result is that pupils feel very safe in such a caring environment.

There are many strengths in teaching, especially the lively way lessons are organised, which ensures that pupils are as involved and active as possible with practical tasks. Teachers assess pupils' attainment accurately. This information is used to set individual targets for pupils, but these do not relate closely enough to what is being learned in each lesson. In addition these targets do not change as soon as they are achieved. As a result pupils are not fully involved in knowing how to move to the next steps in their learning. Skilled, experienced teaching and well targeted support in most lessons overcomes this. Nevertheless, for a small minority this results in satisfactory rather than good progress, especially for a few more able pupils, where the work sometimes lacks challenge.

In the Reception classes, although children make satisfactory progress and are very well cared for, provision varies in quality. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage lacks focus. In particular, assessment and the deployment of teaching assistants are not always used effectively to take children's learning forward at rates which suit their different abilities. In addition the use of the outdoor space to encourage exploration is not sufficiently well organised. Despite this, improvements to assessment and teaching are evident.

Leadership by the headteacher has been exceptional in steering the school through an amalgamation, overseeing new building work and securing improved progress and teaching within the first year of opening. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the

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school's strengths and what needs to be improved, based upon thorough evaluation. They use this information to continue to raise attainment and drive improvement effectively, and so the school's capacity to improve is good.

A stimulating and well-organised curriculum has many strengths, especially the quality of music and the performing arts. Good quality sports and encouragement of healthy living also ensures that pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to lead healthy lives, taking part in physical activity and sport at every opportunity.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - encouraging pupils to talk more about writing and plan their writing tasks together
 - ensuring that teachers collaborate more effectively to develop strategies and share ideas about the teaching of writing.
- Strengthen the use of assessment to increase progress, especially for more able pupils, by:
 - relating pupils' individual targets more closely to lesson objectives
 - moving pupils to the next target as soon as they are ready
 - involving pupils more closely in knowing how to move to the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage to increase pupils' progress by:
 - using assessment and support staff more effectively to meet the differing abilities of all children
 - improving the quality of outdoor spaces for encouraging children to explore for themselves.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils play a full and active part in contributing ideas and their excellent behaviour ensures that lessons run smoothly. They work amicably and very safely with each other. Pupils' achievement is good. Their enjoyment of learning was evident in one science lesson where they excitedly worked out how to prevent animals, made from ice, from melting. By the time pupils leave the school, attainment is above average in English, science and information and communication technology. Although pupils' attainment is closer to average in writing, it is rising. Progress in mathematics is particularly strong, which is why attainment is high in this subject. In one lively lesson pupils received a telephone call ordering a pizza which they then related very well to their work on dividing pies into fractions. In writing and mathematics there are some year groups where a few more able pupils do not make the good progress expected. Careful monitoring shows equally good progress is being made by other groups, regardless of

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ethnic background, gender or ability, including those with learning and other difficulties. Pupils willingly contribute to the community, including acting as play leaders, helping in the office, caring for the environment, fundraising and influencing decisions about the curriculum. They are very keen on sport and eating well and report feeling better for it. In this way they show a growing maturity and sense of responsibility to support them in the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Well organised lessons and an innovative curriculum, including effective use of technology, help pupils' understanding. Pupils are successfully encouraged to work together, take risks and solve problems for themselves. Pupils particularly appreciate the way, as one put it, 'Teachers encourage us to work hard.' Highly effective support, care and guidance are given to pupils, especially those who require help with their behaviour. Teachers assess work well, and this information is carefully passed to the next teacher. Pupils' individual targets do not always relate to the various strands of English and mathematics lessons, and are not changed regularly enough. Pupils are therefore not

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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sure of what they should be doing in some lessons to begin to move to the next level. This is why a small minority of lessons do not result in good progress, especially for a few more-able pupils. Staff have a detailed knowledge of individual pupils' skills and usually provide appropriate support and well-planned tasks for pupils of differing abilities. This is not always effective in writing because, in some lessons, pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to talk about writing or to contribute their ideas for interesting writing tasks. The good curriculum is still being developed, particularly to ensure that skills in information and communication technology are built up more systematically. It is very rich, with excellent performing arts, including enthralling African drumming sessions, as well as regular musical instrument tuition.

An outstanding breakfast club provides a very warm, safe and stimulating start to the day, where pupils can eat hot food, take part in lively games or work and play in the library with attentive and caring staff to help them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders very thoroughly monitor pupils' progress to track improvement since the school opened. As a result the leadership of teaching and learning has been effective in eradicating some inadequate practice, increasing good practice and ensuring that staff work successfully as a team to raise expectations. The school therefore continues to improve. The school recognises that some middle managers have not yet taken a sufficiently active lead in this work. Governors bring many skills to their role in supporting the school well during the amalgamation and in meeting the demands of a major building development.

There is some very good practice to support the way teachers engage in dialogue with parents, leading to good and increasingly positive partnerships with them. Partnerships with other agencies and organisations are outstanding in supporting learning and well-being. This is especially evident in the success of pupils with very particular difficulties and in encouraging such a rich curriculum.

Equality of opportunity is promoted well and there is no evidence of discrimination. All groups of pupils regardless of their differences have equal access to activities, and the school monitors and addresses any difference in performance carefully. School leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective, records are meticulous and that training is regular.

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Links with a school whose pupils have very different ethnic and social backgrounds to those from Northwick Manor form part of the school's good promotion of community cohesion. As a result pupils show great respect for people whose beliefs or cultures are not familiar to them.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception classes are colourful, inviting and full of activities which capture children's imagination. Good links with parents and pre-school providers ensure a smooth start and children are happy and settled. By the time children join Year 1, levels of attainment are just above average in all areas of learning, resulting from satisfactory teaching. A proportion of teaching is good, especially in small groups, although progress is satisfactory overall. Regular, accurate assessment is not used well enough and staff are not deployed effectively enough, however, to help all children progress at a rate to suit them. Nevertheless a recent focus on writing means that children's literacy skills are showing improvement. Opportunities for children to explore things for themselves are plentiful. Staff work together well as a team and leadership is satisfactory, although there is no dedicated leader to drive improvements at a faster rate. Children's growing maturity is seen as they make sound progress, for example in learning how to cooperate or share toys with others. The outdoor areas are inviting, and are enjoyed regularly; for example one group excitedly went on a number hunt and many learned to subtract one from their discovered number. Nevertheless, planning does not encourage children sufficiently to explore things freely for themselves. The children enthusiastically join in with role play, including, 'Whatever the weather,' where they decide what to wear each

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day. They appreciate the very positive relationships and excellent care they receive from all staff.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school and particularly appreciate how much their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are taught well. As one typically reported, 'I am very happy with the school and the progress my children are making.' A few parents expressed concerns about the quality of communication with the school. The inspection team found the systems for linking with parents to be extensive and there is an improving picture of relationships at this early stage of an amalgamation of two schools. Where other concerns are supported by the inspection they are reflected in the report's findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Northwick Manor Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 162 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 595 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	87	54	70	43	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	87	54	73	45	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	30	97	60	12	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	56	41	82	51	9	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	85	52	69	43	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	73	45	76	47	8	5	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	43	85	52	5	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	55	34	82	51	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	36	90	56	8	5	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	36	85	52	3	2	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	28	93	57	18	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	69	43	78	48	8	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	88	54	65	40	6	4	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be. ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northwick Manor Primary School, Worcestershire, WR3 7EA

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons. Yours is a good school with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Senior staff work hard to keep developing the school and, for this reason, your work is improving all the time. Your attainment in writing is a little lower than it is in other subjects and so we have asked the school to help you talk more about writing and discuss how to make writing activities more interesting. We would also like teachers to share more of their ideas with each other about how to improve your writing skills.

Skilful teaching helps you to make good progress and do well, particularly in mathematics. We like the way you really enjoy your learning and always try to do your best. You told us that your teachers make lessons fun and interesting. We have, however, asked them to make sure that your individual targets are linked to more of your lessons, change as soon as you need them to and show you clearly how to move to the next level. This is to be sure that you all make good progress, especially those of you who learn quickly. We suggest that you discuss this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

In Reception, you make satisfactory progress. Your school has been asked to lead more improvements, to make sure that you all make better progress. Staff have also been asked to help you explore more things for yourselves outside the classroom.

You contribute well to school life and the community, especially the way you act as play leaders and share your ideas about activities. You were keen to tell us that the school keeps you very safe and looks after you very well. It is, therefore, very pleasing to see that you are helping yourselves by keeping so healthy. Your behaviour is outstanding, particularly in the way you value learning and play such an active part in lessons. You show a very considerate and mature understanding and respect for others, including those who have different beliefs and ways of living.

We think that this, alongside your mature attitudes to working with others, helps you to be well prepared for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector

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