

Newman School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106966
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	356062
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Michele Crichton

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stuart Bowes
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret O'Hara
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2008
School address	East Bawtry Road Whiston, Rotherham South Yorkshire S60 3LX
Telephone number	01709 828262
Fax number	01709 821162
Email address	nsssgarland-grimes@rgfl.org

Age group	2–19
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2010
Inspection number	356062

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited nine lessons and nine teachers were observed. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors and the School's Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including those relating to self-evaluation, pupils' progress, safeguarding and community cohesion. They also took into account the views of 31 parents and carers who returned questionnaires to the inspection team.

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

- The effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels.
- The effectiveness of the school's strategies to support attendance.
- The impact of the school's strategies regarding community cohesion.
- The impact of the school's specialist status.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized special school for pupils with physical disabilities and medical conditions. A significant number of pupils have additional disabilities such as autism, visual and hearing impairments or moderate learning difficulties. It serves the whole of Rotherham. Very few pupils are looked after by the local authority. The majority of pupils are of White British origin with a significant minority from Asian or Asian British (Pakistani heritage) families. Very few children attend the Early Years Foundation Stage and are decreasing in numbers annually while sixth form provision continues to expand. At the time of inspection the deputy headteacher of the school was the acting headteacher until the appointment of a new headteacher. Since the last inspection the school has maintained or enhanced its extensive range of quality marks and has additionally added the Becta ICT mark and The Charter for Workforce Development. The school was designated as a Specialist school for cognition and learning in September 2009.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Newman is an extraordinary school. It consistently provides an outstanding quality of provision and care and ensures excellent outcomes for pupils from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the sixth form.

The great majority of parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school's dynamic, stimulating and caring ethos, with typical comments such as, 'I have nothing but praise and a great respect for the staff. My son has turned out to be a confident and all-round smashing young adult because of the help, constant praise and confidence building from school staff.'

As a consequence of the pupils' significant special educational needs and/or disabilities, standards are low on entry to the school. A small number of the children start their learning at Newman but, more usually, pupils join the school at different points in their education. However, over the course of time, the overwhelming majority make outstanding progress in their learning.

The school is very well led at all levels, including the very knowledgeable and astute governing body. Leaders are committed to raising achievement and continual improvement through constant and rigorous self-evaluation, monitoring and action planning at all levels. Improvements are also driven by constantly refining the innovative and enterprising curriculum and ensuring that the school's specialist status impacts extremely positively for pupils both within the school as well as for those it supports externally. These influences have further potential for extending even more the very good practices that are present across the whole of the school to share and support other schools and partners.

The quality of teaching and assessment is sometimes good but more often outstanding. Teachers plan their lessons exceptionally thoroughly and individually, dependent upon the skills, abilities and aptitude of each pupil. Staff and other adults have excellent relationships with pupils and provide support and care with great sensitivity. The combination of these factors leads to high levels of enjoyment and outstanding behaviour.

Pupils' safety and welfare take high priority and they have a very good understanding of caring for themselves and becoming more independent. Their interests and attitudes prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their education and the world of work. Attendance is good overall.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further promote the wealth of good practices and excellent outcomes for pupils and students by utilising more fully the flourishing international and community partnerships and links.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

All pupils regardless of need acquire a wide range of personal skills such as confidence, perseverance and teamwork but also achieve very well in the development of literacy, numeracy and communication skills. Pupils make good but more frequently outstanding progress in their learning. As a result, the pupils are well prepared for each new stage of their education. In lessons, pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and have extremely positive attitudes. This is because the pace of the lesson is appropriate to the pupils' needs: work is made fun; learning activities are interesting and are consistently relevant to their interests and abilities.

Pupils feel safe and secure in school and know that they are supported well by all the adults with whom they work. Behaviour is outstanding and it is a frequent occurrence for pupils to help and support each other without the slightest prompt from staff or other adults. Pupils are happy, sensible, courteous and friendly to one another, staff and visitors.

Pupils show an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and are very capable of explaining about healthy choices. Older pupils talk extensively about their roles in their enterprising Cyber café, where 'you have to start the job by washing your hands and wearing your hat'.

Attendance is good even though a number of pupils have serious medical conditions which mean they have repeated stays in hospital or at home. However, their learning still takes place via internet access to their teachers and through regular home and hospital visits by highly experienced staff within the school.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants' expectations of pupils are ambitious and pupils rise to these expectations. Staff use accurate and in-depth knowledge of learners' individual needs effectively to ensure that they remain well motivated and engaged. Equally important, they make learning fun and enjoyable. Staff routinely make excellent use of computers, communication aids and interactive whiteboards to guide and enhance learning. Ongoing accurate assessment, keen observations and probing questions successfully promote high-quality learning in lessons.

The highly flexible individualised curriculum very closely matches the diverse and individual personal needs of all pupils and is outstanding. Unique programmes to engage disaffected students, such as spray can art, are highly effective, leading to improved attendance, increased motivation in learning and to external accreditation. The school is at the vanguard of innovation in customising learning through Alternative, Augmentative Communication (AAC) for pupils attending Newman and its partner schools. The combination of technological aids and highly specialist staff ensure that pupils make outstanding strides in their ability to communicate in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language. The school's work in Alternative Forms of Recording through

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

digital media to embed and sustain learning is also nationally renowned and is pioneering in providing rich opportunities for continued levels of engagement and motivation. These factors result in outstanding outcomes for pupils' learning, skill enhancement and development.

Care, guidance and support are of the highest quality. The transitional arrangements as the pupils move from the Early Years Foundation Stage through the school and, for many, into the post-16 provision are excellent and ensure continuity and progressive challenge in pupils' learning and personal development. The school works very well with external agencies and partners to provide targeted support to pupils to help them tackle difficulties they may face physically, emotionally, socially or academically.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

All school leaders at every level are relentless in their drive for sustained improvement of the school to secure excellence for all pupils. This high level of functioning continues during a period of temporary leadership. The morale and commitment of staff are exceptional and the school has sophisticated monitoring and self-evaluation systems to secure success for all. This ensures that all staff are highly skilled and all aspects of pupils' performance are critically evaluated.

The governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and has insightful first-hand knowledge and understanding of the school's work. Safeguarding is addressed with a very high degree of rigour and statutory requirements are exceptionally well met. School leaders consider the safety of pupils and staff at all times and careful and effective risk assessments, for example, are exemplary.

Engagement with parents and carers, other partnerships, including work with local, national and international schools, and community cohesion are all outstanding. These highly effective partnerships make a major contribution to pupils' learning and well-being and enhance the school's successful specialist status for cognition and learning. International links regarding AAC enable individuals and families all over the world to communicate, keep in touch and keep informed, and the award-winning Personal Demons project which champions media-based learning makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion.

A strong commitment to the individual lies at the heart of the school's ethos and it gives high priority to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities. Outcomes are carefully monitored to ensure that they are all equally positive, despite the different groups of

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

learners. Excellent activities and inspirational role models encourage participation and enjoyment. This is demonstrated through pupils training for the Paralympics or encouragement and support to act and perform in the theatre. The school offers excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Welfare is paramount in the Early Years Foundation Stage and links to the health and therapy teams are very well maintained to effectively serve children's individual needs. Safeguarding, provision, pupil outcomes, care, guidance and support are as strong as in the main school. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding, with high expectations that drive the aspirations of staff. Teamwork is phenomenal. Outstanding attention is given to all aspects of children's personal development and children make excellent progress personally and academically. Learning is fun and teachers maintain a good pace, with a wide range of free choice and guided activities. Behaviour is positive because the children are busily involved in experimenting and finding out for themselves, with every opportunity taken to develop self-confidence, self-esteem and independence. For example, effective use of the interactive whiteboard makes learning enjoyable, enables staff to give immediate praise when children get things right but also ensures they persist with tasks if first answers were not quite spot on. Close links with parents and carers and detailed observations ensure staff make clear judgements regarding a child's starting point. This enables staff to tailor-make experiences to each child's needs and measure accurately the extent of the progress made and the next steps needed.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Sixth form

The effectiveness of the sixth form, overall, is outstanding. The learning environment is dynamic and inclusive and promotes an ethos of independence through active participation in learning. This is a result of outstanding leadership and management, which assures high-quality teaching and learning.

There are very high expectations for what students will achieve and this is reflected in the very challenging targets that are set for each individual. All students follow accredited courses and other awards, which include work-related learning, in which they are very successful. All students leave with at least one and far more frequently they leave with numerous accredited qualifications.

Staff work collectively to address students' significant needs through an innovative and exciting curriculum which develops students' academic and independent skills exceptionally well. The school has created opportunities where students develop exceptional skills in enterprise through opportunities in catering and horticulture. Additionally, the understanding of information and communication technology (ICT) and its application in the world of work is outstanding. This was very evident in a lesson where students were engaged in a long-term project of designing and developing their own action-based computer games. In the area of film and animation, the school has received national recognition. For example, students have been commissioned to produce a series of visual effects to accompany a music CD which is being released by a professional singer and musician. Effective partnerships locally and further afield and the school's specialist status create exciting opportunities to give pupils unique and real experiences. The success in enterprise experiences created is reflected in the very high quality of work and materials the students produce.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

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

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires are very positive about the quality of education provided for their children. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concern about pupil's safety and the progress they make. Inspection findings do not endorse these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newman 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 22 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 82 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	14	64	6	27	0	0	2	9
The school keeps my child safe	15	68	4	18	2	9	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	73	4	18	2	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	64	4	18	1	5	2	9
The teaching is good at this school	17	77	3	14	1	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	55	7	32	1	5	1	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	55	7	32	1	5	0	0
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)	12	55	6	27	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	64	5	23	0	0	2	9
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	50	5	23	1	5	1	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	59	6	27	1	5	1	5
The school is led and managed effectively	14	64	5	23	1	5	1	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	73	3	14	0	0	2	9

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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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:	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 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 pupils' 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.



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newman School, Rotherham, S60 3LX

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school in December. Even though it was close to Christmas, everyone was still busy learning and we really enjoyed our time with you. We both had many discussions with pupils in the school and students in the sixth form. It was very clear that from what you said and the responses from your parents and carers in their questionnaires that you are happy at school, feel safe and are learning exceptionally well.

We know, because you told us, that you appreciate the staff because they provide you with outstanding care, guidance and support throughout your time in school. They enjoy being with you as much as you appreciate them, which shows in your warm and welcoming school.

Virtually everything in Newman is outstanding and this is from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the sixth form. We both thought that the work you did by the time you got to the sixth form was exceptional. These included; your learning in lessons, how well you learn to develop your abilities, your skills in horticulture (the wreaths and flower arrangements were excellent). Also, the websites and animations you made, to mention but a few, were outstanding. You have established your Cyber Café to practice and develop your skills but we thought you did so many things well that you and your teachers could share them even more with others. We know that now this has been suggested you and your teachers will come up with some amazing things because that is what you do.

We both wish you every success for the future and also wish you a very happy new year.

Yours sincerely

Dr Michele Crichton

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.