Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Newtown Community Primary School

Newtown, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 0BB

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 December 2024

Outcome

Newtown Community Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this multi-cultural school, they value and celebrate difference. The school threads the values of kindness and respect through all aspects of school life. Positive relationships are at the heart of the school. These start in the early years, where staff care for children and help them to develop independence.

Pupils know who to speak to if they have worries. They are confident adults will help them sort out any problems. As a result, pupils are happy and feel safe.

Pupils live up to the school's high expectations of them. They display very positive attitudes to learning. At social times, pupils play hockey, tennis and basketball led by specialist coaches. Pupils have impeccable manners and collaborate well with one another. They work hard. Over time, pupils make strong progress and typically achieve well.

Many pupils take part in extra-curricular clubs and activities like archery, photography and football. Pupils enjoy the trips and visits that are planned for them. For example, Year 6 pupils were keen to tell the inspector about a trip to London, made memorable by the visit to the Tower of London which helped them bring their learning in history to life.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school's curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most subjects, the school has set out the important knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which they should learn it. For

example, in mathematics, children in the Reception Year learn to recognise numbers and match these to different quantities. In Year 4, pupils build on this and convert between mixed number and improper fractions. In Year 5, pupils apply this knowledge and explain their mathematical thinking. Pupils develop their drawing skills by sketching self-portraits each year. By Year 6, they perfect their use of line, tone and shape to create sophisticated drawings.

However, in a minority of wider curriculum subjects, the school has not identified key knowledge with the same clarity and so the progression of learning is not as clear. This makes it difficult for some pupils to make links with what they have learned before and prevents them from building a depth of knowledge over time.

Reading is a priority. Many pupils who join the school speak English as an additional language (EAL). Children learn to read from the very start of the Reception Year. In phonics lessons, staff introduce new sounds clearly. This approach supports pupils to identify sounds, blending them to decode and read new words. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This helps to develop their fluency and confidence. By the end of Year 1, all pupils, including those with EAL, achieve highly in the phonics screening check. The school quickly responded to a dip in key stage 2 reading outcomes. A refined approach to teach reading now equips pupils with the key skills and knowledge they need to comprehend increasingly complex texts. Across key stages, pupils benefit from a diverse range of texts, many of which reflect different cultures.

From early years, the school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND swiftly. Staff make adaptations to learning so that pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Staff build close working relationships with families to understand and tackle any barriers to attendance and reduce persistent absence. As a result, current attendance is above average.

Pupils benefit from a strong curriculum for personal, social and health education. They learn about online safety, mental health and fundamental British values, such as tolerance and respect. Pupils show an exceptional understanding of the protected characteristics. These help them understand the importance of challenging discrimination.

The school's work to develop pupils' character is exemplary. Staff support pupils to build their own toolkit for life. Pupils use 'acts of kindness' and 'labels of love' to help other people to feel positive and happy. Pupils use their 'sunshine specs' to develop a positive mindset and build resilience. Pupils believe in themselves. They are confident and show impeccable behaviour. Pupils learn how to handle responsibility through leadership roles, like the 'Green team', who look for ways to save electricity and promote recycling around the school.

Governors hold the school to account for its actions and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Regular visits, ongoing training and a focus on safeguarding and the quality of education ensure that governors stay informed. The school considers staff workload and well-being. Staff are incredibly proud to be part of this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the key knowledge has not been identified at every stage. As a result, new learning does not always build upon pupils' existing knowledge, and some pupils are unable to make links to their prior learning. The school should ensure that all subjects identify the important information that pupils need to remember to build a secure understanding.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	126293
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10334683
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Durrant
Headteacher	Chris Marshall
Website	www.newtownschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two unregistered alternative provisions for pupils.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, members of the local governing body and representatives from the local authority.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also considered responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Gavin Summerfield, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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