

Newtown CofE Primary School

Newtown, Wem, Shrewsbury, SY4 5NU

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The excellent drive, enthusiasm and vision of the headteacher, combined with the full support of an exceptionally talented and committed staff team, have transformed the school from satisfactory to outstanding by greatly improving teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers know their pupils' needs particularly well and use the information very effectively to ensure that these are fully met. Progress in English and mathematics is tracked extremely carefully, but more informally in other areas.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception class.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- From an early age, pupils enjoy coming to school and this shows in their eagerness to learn and their consistently high attendance rates.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They love being in school, have very positive attitudes to their learning and support each other extremely well. They feel very safe in school.
- The school promotes mutual care and respect, recognises pupils' achievements, champions their independence, builds their self-esteem and drives the pursuit of excellence for all.
- Staff are supportive and caring. With governing body members, volunteers and visitors to the school, they create an exceptional place for learning.
- Excellent support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs ensures they make outstanding progress.
- The headteacher is passionate about ensuring that all pupils do as well as they can and sets very high expectations for staff. Checks on teaching and progress are very thorough and staff receive the right support and training to ensure all lessons are of a high quality.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, know exactly what needs to be done to sustain the high standards the school has reached and are ambitious for it to do even better.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They develop into confident, articulate and reflective individuals who are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with representatives of the governing body, members of staff, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 52 responses to the questionnaire for parents and carers (Parent View).
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Clive Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than most other primary schools. Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. This extra funding is provided to support the education of certain groups, such as pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion of such pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress by applying the excellent systems used in reading, writing and mathematics to other subject areas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils across the range of year groups and abilities make outstanding progress from broadly typical starting points when they join the school in the Nursery and Reception class. This exceptional progress was reflected in the high quality of learning observed in lessons during the inspection, and confirmed by work in pupils' books. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make very rapid progress because their programmes of support and additional help ensure that their needs are fully met.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception class achieve well because of the high quality of teaching and support, effective links between the school, home and pre-schools and the range of activities provided within the classroom. They make particularly good progress in developing their social and communication skills and are well prepared for their entry to Year 1.
- Achievement has risen rapidly in the last year, with progress greatly improved. Outstanding teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 ensures that pupils make very rapid progress, with a high proportion of pupils in each year group exceeding nationally expected progress for their age. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, attainment in English and mathematics is very high.
- The latest data from the 2013 national tests demonstrate that attainment is continuing to improve, with a higher proportion of more-able pupils achieving Level 6 in English and mathematics. The school's data for the current Year 6 pupils show they are doing even better.
- Pupils use their skills in English, communication and mathematics to enhance their learning across the curriculum, so they also enjoy and achieve very well in other subjects. Teaching assistants play an invaluable role in supporting individuals and small groups, both within the classroom and on a one-to-one basis.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in developing their reading skills. This starts by teaching younger pupils to read by linking letters to the sounds they represent (phonics). Key Stage 1 pupils who read to the inspector were able to confidently use their reading skills to break down and sound out difficult or unfamiliar words. The teaching of reading through daily phonics lessons and guided reading activities continues through all age groups. As a result, pupils throughout the school read exceptionally well and older pupils read fluently, with expression and with a good understanding of their texts.
- The needs of the small number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are fully identified. There is no significant difference between the attainment of these pupils and their classmates. The school uses the funding very well to provide carefully matched additional adult support, for example through frequent small group or one-to-one work. This helps eligible pupils make the same outstanding progress as their classmates. Extra resources are also allocated to ensure that pupils can join in extra activities made available to all other pupils.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Much of it is outstanding and it is never less than good. Where teaching is outstanding, lessons are very well planned and resourced, move at a rapid pace and include a variety of activities that greatly interest and enthuse pupils. Strong links are made between different subjects and to previous learning,

helping to promote pupils' confidence and enjoyment.

- There is a strong focus on ensuring that each lesson provides pupils with imaginative activities that promote independent learning, challenge and enthusiasm. This, along with an ethos where success is celebrated and pupils are confident to 'have a go' even if they make mistakes, means that pupils love learning and relish challenges.
- Strategies for managing the behaviour of pupils are very effective, with the result that lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils work hard and sustain their concentration without the need for constant adult intervention.
- Each pupil's progress in reading, writing and mathematics is rigorously tracked and checked as they move through the school. Regular meetings are held to discuss the information gained. These meetings ensure that teachers have an excellent understanding of how well the pupils in their charge are doing and the action they should take to support and help them to reach their challenging targets. The success of current initiatives is assessed and, where necessary, additional support is allocated to ensure all pupils continue to make good progress. The assessment of other subject areas is currently more informal, however, and does not have such a strong impact on achievement.
- Teachers' regular and thorough marking of pupils' work ensures they are praised for their hard work, encouraged to check any errors and have a very good understanding of the 'next steps' they need to take in order to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour is outstanding, in class, around the school, in assemblies and in the playground areas. Relationships between pupils and adults are extremely positive. Older pupils are extremely mindful of the younger ones, during morning breaks and lunchtimes, for instance.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary and this is a major factor in the excellent progress they make in most lessons. They respond very well to the many opportunities planned for them to discuss their ideas with other pupils, either with a partner or in a small group. They understand the importance of being part of a team and that everyone contributes to its success. They know the importance of listening carefully and encouraging and valuing the views and opinions of others.
- Pupils report that the school has an effective system of rewards and sanctions, which ensures that any rare unsatisfactory behaviour is dealt with effectively and promptly. Pupils who find behaving well more difficult are sensitively managed and skilfully supported so that their behaviour improves significantly.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, and they are enthusiastic about their education. This is reflected in their consistently high levels of attendance. They move around the school calmly and quietly. Year 6 pupils said that they will be 'really sorry' to leave the school at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of different forms of bullying, including any that might be encountered through internet sites. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe. They say that they feel 'very safe' in school and are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly. Through their membership of a number of school monitoring committees – the Eco, Gardening, Health and Safety, Litter and Learning Environment committees, for example – pupils demonstrate their pride in the school and take their responsibilities very seriously.

- Pupils respond extremely well to the school's excellent promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have a very clear sense of what is right and wrong.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides exceptionally strong leadership. Since the previous inspection, raising standards and progress across the school has been the top priority for the headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body. As a result, there has been a marked improvement in teaching and learning which has led to outstanding achievement. Thorough checks on every aspect of the school by senior leaders have correctly identified the right areas for further development.
- Staff are well motivated and fully committed to improving the school and providing an all-round education for all pupils. They share a sense of responsibility and work very effectively together. They regularly take advantage of training to further enhance their work.
- Teaching is well led. As a result of regular monitoring and support, teaching is now consistently good or outstanding across the school. Together with careful tracking of pupils' progress, the detailed information about teaching that comes from monitoring ensures that planning for improvement is founded on good evidence and accurate data. The performance management of staff is built on this rigorous and accurate checking of their lessons, their planning and pupils' progress. The resulting targets must be met as a condition of pay rises and promotion.
- The lively and creative curriculum is enhanced by a raft of visits, some of which are residential, when pupils benefit from the experience of new and unfamiliar surroundings. This helps prepare pupils very well for their next stage of education.
- The school's promotion of equality of opportunity in all its work is outstanding. It is constantly alert to any variation in achievement and searches for new ways to overcome any weaknesses.
- The school provides outstanding pastoral care for its pupils. The small size of the school ensures that staff know the needs of all pupils and families very well. The school has very positive relationships with parents and carers and strong links with a range of partners including the church, the village residents' committee – some pupils deliver 'meals on wheels' to local residents, for example – local care homes and other small schools. All these contribute significantly to a strong sense of community and improvements in pupils' achievement and well-being.
- An atmosphere of mutual respect pervades the school and this is reflected in the responses to the staff questionnaire, the school's own surveys exploring the views of parents and the views expressed in Parent View.
- Strong links with other local schools help to overcome the potential isolation of a small school. These links enable staff to share their expertise, and ensure pupils gain wider experiences and broaden their horizons.
- Fully supported and monitored by the governing body, the school makes effective use of the pupil premium to employ additional teaching and support staff to provide small group and one-to-one work. This helps to ensure that eligible pupils achieve as well as their friends.
- At the time of inspection, the school had yet to receive the additional government funding to improve sport in primary schools. However, it has already made plans for its use and for

evaluating the impact on pupils' physical well-being.

- Local authority support has been helpful to the school. For example, the local authority helped the school to strengthen the way it checks on how well it is doing and has provided support for the governing body.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body provides strong support for leaders and managers and challenges them to ensure that the school continues to improve and move forward. It makes certain that safeguarding procedures and practices are secure. It has overseen arrangements for the use of the pupil premium funding and checked they are working. Governors are aware of the arrangements for making sure teachers' pay is closely linked to their performance. The governing body plays a full part in the school's self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement planning. Governors ensure that they are well trained and understand what data show about the performance of the school compared to similar schools and schools nationally. The governing body knows what is happening in the school and is aware that overall provision is exceptional.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123490
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	426979

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Powell
Headteacher	Andrew Hodson
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2011
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