

# Newfield School

Edge Lane, Crosby, Liverpool, L23 4TG

**Inspection dates** 13–14 May 2014

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in all areas of their personal, social and academic development. Some pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points and achieve good grades in GCSEs in English and mathematics when they leave.
- Teaching is good across the school. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to support and help pupils with complex barriers to learning to achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is usually good. Any difficulties pupils experience are managed well so that disruption to the learning of others is rare.
- The school's actions to keep pupils safe and secure are outstanding and parents and pupils know that Newfield is a warm, welcoming and safe place to be.
- The headteacher enjoys the confidence of her staff and governors, the local authority, parents and pupils. She has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and is determined that pupils will enjoy success in both their academic and personal lives.
- The new alternative provision is making a very effective contribution to engaging and motivating pupils who find it particularly difficult to attend school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not result in outstanding learning. Sometimes work for the most able does not stretch them enough.
- Questioning does not always help pupils to develop and express their ideas well enough. Sometimes staff in classrooms do too much for pupils so that they do not have to think deeply for themselves.
- The range of courses and qualifications pupils can take do not always match the skills they will need in their future lives.
- Subject leaders do not always check that planned activities are well-matched to the different needs of the pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 whole lessons or parts of lessons all taught by different teachers. Five of the lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, pupils, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority. Discussions were held with two parents when they dropped off or collected their children.
- There were insufficient responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire, to be able to take them into account but inspectors considered responses to the school’s own survey of parents’ views.
- Inspectors also considered the responses on the 24 staff questionnaires returned.
- A range of documentation was reviewed including the school’s data on pupils’ progress, the school’s own view of how well it is doing and development planning, performance management, behaviour logs and safeguarding information.

## Inspection team

Hilary Ward, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Newfield provides for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Over half of the pupils have additional special educational needs. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- Pupils have often been out of school for periods of time or have been poor attenders in previous settings before being admitted to Newfield.
- More than three-quarters of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language.
- Only a small proportion of the pupils are girls.
- Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in staffing, including the appointment of a new headteacher.
- In agreement with the local authority, the school opened an alternative provision named TEEN. (Transforming Engagement and Enjoyment at Newfield) in September 2013. This is on the site of an old primary school a few miles from the main school, and provides for a group of pupils who were not attending school or who were finding it difficult to manage in the school setting.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that more of it is outstanding by:
  - ensuring all pupils are always given work which is at the right level of difficulty
  - encouraging pupils, especially the most able, to develop their independent thinking skills and resilience by doing less for them
  - using questioning more effectively to help pupils develop their verbal skills to explain their views and opinions clearly.
- Raise the achievement of pupils so that more of them make outstanding progress from their different starting points to the time they leave school by:
  - ensuring the curriculum is well-matched to pupils' present and future employability needs and increasing the range of accredited courses available in school or with partners
  - enabling middle leaders to further develop their roles in checking that teaching and learning in their subjects is well-matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils can be admitted at varying times in their schooling, often after periods out of school, so that typically they arrive with a low level of knowledge and skills. However, they settle quickly into the warm, caring environment and begin to make rapid progress. The nurture group offers a safe and secure setting which helps pupils begin to thrive.
- Newfield pinpoints pupils' exact starting points on entry and carries out regular checks to ensure pupils are doing well over time. Extra help is quickly provided for those who need it.
- Rates of progress in reading and writing have increased due to a whole-school emphasis on ensuring these skills are practised frequently in all subjects. As a result all pupils have made at least the progress expected of them in English over the last year in the secondary department and a large majority of primary-aged pupils have made outstanding progress. In an art lesson pupils were encouraged to check their spelling and grammar when designing posters for the visit of the giant puppets to Liverpool in the summer.
- Progress in mathematics, particularly in the secondary department, has been slower but the majority of students make at least the progress expected of them from their starting points in this subject. The school has now taken action to accelerate learning in mathematics and this is beginning to show positive results.
- Year 11 pupils enjoy a work experience placement with a wide range of providers during the autumn term and gain GCSEs in English, mathematics and other subjects when they leave school. The majority move on to further education. However, the range of courses available in the main school are not broad enough to enable pupils with increasingly complex needs to develop some of the vocational and employability skills they might be able to use in the future.
- The alternative provision at TEEN is now offering the pupils who attend there more choice both on-site and in partner schools, colleges and work placements so that they can follow courses which are of particular interest to them. TEEN has been successful in raising the attendance of its pupils because they are motivated to join in the curriculum on offer and contribute to TEEN's development.
- Pupil premium funding is being used very effectively to provide extra help for those who need it, to purchase new resources and provide training for staff to meet the differing needs of the pupils. The school is careful to check that the funding is closing gaps in learning so that there is no difference in the achievement of the large majority who are eligible for free school meals and for those in the care of the local authority compared with other pupils.
- Termly checks on pupils' progress by senior and middle leaders and by governors also makes sure that the small number of girls and those from minority ethnic heritages do just as well as other pupils, so that all groups are given an equal opportunity to succeed. However, the checks on lesson planning to ensure lesson activities are enabling all pupils, especially the most able, to make the best possible progress in each lesson are not as rigorous as those that check progress over time.

### The quality of teaching is good

- There has been a high turnover of staff in the last few years but senior leaders have ensured staff are provided with training and support to quickly develop an understanding of the needs of the pupils, including those with a range of additional learning and behavioural difficulties.
- Pupils benefit from a good range of interesting activities so that topics that pupils might find boring are enjoyable. For example, in science, Year 10 boys were asked to make a presentation for younger pupils to explain how to work out the efficiency of household objects. This effectively ensured that pupils understood the calculation for themselves and maintained their interest by thinking how to make it clear to others.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to extend pupils' thinking about the topic more deeply or to

develop pupils' views and opinions and to consider those of other people by encouraging more in-depth discussion. Occasionally, staff do too much for pupils, especially the most able, although this can often be with the best of intentions to ensure they remain on task and do not give up.

- Staff are very committed to helping pupils develop their personal and social skills. They have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about sharing this with pupils and finding ways to engage and motivate them.
- Outdoor learning is an increasingly popular way to deliver lessons such as science experiments. Pupils enjoy planting up flower tubs and vegetable beds, visiting the forest school or recycling waste. Pupils are given opportunities to go out into the local community which helps them to develop their spiritual, moral social and cultural understanding.
- Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to learning and are developing their roles as educators well. The strong relationships they develop with pupils often help them to remain in lessons when they find learning difficult.
- Marking of pupils' work has improved and is used consistently across the school and pupils know what they need to do to improve.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They respond well to staff and most make good gains in learning how to manage their own behaviour.
- Generally behaviour is managed consistently by staff because they get to know pupils very well. The school has further training planned so that staff can better understand some of the more complex barriers to learning which some pupils face.
- Younger pupils and those approaching examinations are keen to learn and Year 11 pupils have even been willing to attend extra sessions in their own time in order to achieve good grades in their GCSEs. However, pupils at Key Stage 3 can sometimes become more disinterested in lessons. Teachers work hard to provide them with interesting topics, particularly drawing on topics of local interest such as sport in Liverpool, so that they continue to make the progress expected of them.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school provides a safe haven for many pupils and parents often notice big improvements in their children's behaviour over time. The school's open-door policy is welcomed by parents who know they can always speak to staff about concerns.
- Bullying is managed very well and pupils say they are confident staff will deal with any issues. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. Many pupils spend a lot of time on the internet or on phones out of school hours and the school has ensured that, as far as possible, they know how to keep themselves safe from cyber-bullying. Guidance is shared with parents on the school's website and the school is currently seeking ways to better inform parents who cannot access technology.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. They usually look after and care about their school and do not like others to spoil it. They behave exceptionally well on visits out-of-school and this is commented on by members of the public.
- Attendance remains a concern for a small number of pupils, some of whom have never or rarely attended. TEEN is beginning to make a positive impact on the attendance of some of these pupils and the school has extensive strategies in place as a result of which attendance is improving overall.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Since the previous inspection there have been changes to the senior and middle leadership teams and to the governing body. The headteacher is highly effective in managing these

changes to improve the provision in the school.

- Data on pupils' progress is collected and analysed every term and staff teams frequently meet to check on pupils' achievements. The school is especially rigorous in checking that any gap in the attainment or progress of minority groups and for those eligible to pupil premium funding are closed.
- Middle leaders have developed their roles well following a restructuring although checks that lesson planning is well-matched to the needs of different pupils are not yet as well developed as their checks on pupils' progress. All leaders have action plans to improve the delivery of their subjects and these are routinely monitored by senior leaders.
- Strong leadership of teaching and learning through regular and robust checks on teachers' performance and pupils' learning has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching so that an increasing amount is good or outstanding. All teachers are supported through training, which is well-linked to school development planning. Increases in salary are only supported for consistently good teaching.
- The new alternative provision at TEEN is very well-managed to better meet the needs of the pupils who attend there and pupils have enjoyed contributing to its development. The building itself requires considerable further improvement.
- The curriculum has a strong emphasis on ensuring pupils develop necessary skills in reading, writing, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. However, although Newfield enjoys excellent links with partner schools and colleges at a leadership level, there are insufficient opportunities for individual students to access alternative courses, either in school or with one of these partner providers, in order to develop the life skills, work-related learning and vocational skills they might use in future employment.
- Parents feel very well-supported by the school and hold it in high esteem. Those who returned the school's own questionnaire all felt well-informed about what their children were learning and that they could ask the school questions or seek advice.
- The local authority provides effective support, particularly to the school's leaders, in assuring the quality of its checks on performance. Officers have worked with the school to make premises available for the alternative provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - There has been a turnover of representation on the governing body with about half of governors new to the board this year. However, under the skilful guidance of the headteacher and the more experienced governors, they have quickly developed a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They ask challenging questions about the data on pupils' progress and understand their duty to ensure pay progression is linked to performance management. They ensure that pupil premium and primary sports funding is being used effectively to close any gaps in the achievement between groups of pupils and to provide additional physical education and sports activities. Safeguarding and health and safety are always given utmost priority and statutory requirements are met. Governors are currently exploring ways to find funding to make TEEN a more suitable environment for learning.

## 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

|                                |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 104982 |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Sefton |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 439642 |

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

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Special                             |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community special                   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 7–16                                |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                               |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 79                                  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Lesley Paterson                     |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Julie Starkey                       |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 11 May 2011                         |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0151 934 2991                       |
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