

Newlands Primary School

Windermere Avenue, Millbrook, Southampton, SO16 9QX

Inspection dates 1–2 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The high-quality care and safeguarding of pupils provided at the school truly reflect the school's stated views and values. These include helping pupils to think positively, to say 'I can' and aspire to follow their dreams.
- The inspirational headteacher is the driving force behind the school's rapid improvement. Her leadership is strengthened by excellent teamwork with senior leaders, including governors, and with staff.
- As a community, and with the full confidence of parents, leaders share a strong and united commitment to accelerating pupils' progress.
- Challenged and supported by governors, staff make full use of the high-quality facilities to sustain a strong capacity to improve.
- Pupils' mostly average levels of attainment at the end of Year 6 reflect pupils' securely good achievement from typically well-below-expected starting points.
- The quality of teaching is good and is underpinned by very supportive relationships which lift pupils' confidence and stimulate their positive attitudes to learning.
- Children starting school in the Reception classes progress extremely well across a stimulating range of practical learning activities.
- As a result, pupils feel very safe, behave well, enjoy learning and are proud of their school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to make sure that pupils make the best progress in every year group.
- Teachers do not always extend the pupils' ability to improve their own and each other's work well enough, and this impedes progress.
- At times, the pupils' skills in handwriting, and in recalling number facts to solve problems, are not developed well enough as they move through Key Stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 26 lessons and learning activities, and were accompanied by the headteacher and assistant headteachers for some of these sessions.
- The inspectors observed morning and lunch breaks and also observed two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with representative groups of pupils, and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with governors, and the lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Not enough parents' responses were received via the online questionnaire (Parent View). In planning and undertaking the inspection the inspectors examined parents' responses to the school's own questionnaire conducted earlier this year in the summer term.
- The inspectors spoke informally with a number of parents as they brought and collected their children to and from school. The lead inspector also met separately with a parent.
- Meetings were held with school staff, including senior leaders, and 17 staff questionnaires were received and considered.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information and checks on pupils' progress and the planning and quality of teaching and learning.
- The inspectors examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and the safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. They also considered the school's sports premium action plan.

Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Peter Thrussell	Additional inspector
Veronica Stoodley	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs supported by school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A well-above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to pupils who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school at other than the normal times is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated in two Reception classes.
- The school has experienced significant changes in teaching and leadership staff since the previous inspection.
- The school has also completed its move into new accommodation since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding learning and, in particular, raise pupils' attainments in basic literacy and numeracy skills as they move through Key Stage 2 by:
 - improving the teaching of pupils' handwriting and pupils' ability to mentally recall and use number facts to solve mathematical problems
 - strengthening pupils' ability to check and improve their own and each other's work, including by raising the quality of pupils' responses to teachers' marking.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and strongly includes staff and governors in making very valuable contributions to the running of the school. This very strong teamwork and shared sense of direction has brought rapid improvement.
- By working in unison, leaders and staff also ensure that procedures are rigorously applied to safeguard pupils.
- The staff engage fully with parents through regular meetings. Parents respond with appreciation to the school's efforts to help pupils achieve.
- Leaders at all levels check school performance extremely effectively. Senior and middle leaders use careful checks of teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, leaders have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve.
- The headteacher sets challenging targets for teachers to support their training and improve their work and pupils' learning. This is evident in the increasing quality of the teaching and in the pupils' rapidly rising achievement, which also reflect a strong capacity to improve into the future.
- Staff diligently promote equality of opportunity and tackle any potential discrimination. This is seen in the way disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and others new to the school are helped to achieve as well as other pupils.
- Leaders use additional government funding effectively. This includes providing additional qualified teachers in class and raising pupils' confidence and readiness to learn by enabling them to join school trips.
- The school provides a broad and comprehensive range of learning activities and makes good use of its new facilities to develop pupils' skills. Displays of pupils' activities throughout the school include their responses to museum artefacts and to diversity in art. These also illustrate how the school successfully promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares them for life in modern Britain.
- The physical education leader ensures that additional sports funding is used very effectively. Specialist training for teachers has widened the range of sports and links with expressive arts, such as dance, drama and music available for the pupils. This has improved teaching and pupils' skills and fitness and brought a three-fold increase in the number of pupils attending sports clubs and more success in competitions.
- The local authority has played an effective role in bringing about improvement, including training for teachers and governors. The school now sustains its own drive for improvement and receives 'light-touch' support from the local authority and works collaboratively within the federation partnership of schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors fully contribute to the strong sense of direction. In recent years they have raised their skills by engaging in training, including in the safeguarding of pupils. As a result, governors fully meet their statutory obligations. Governors visit the school regularly to check the work of the school at first hand. They receive detailed reports from the headteacher about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. As a result, governors have a very secure understanding of the quality of what the school offers pupils, especially teaching, and how it impacts on pupils' progress. Now joined by new members, governors have strengthened how they hold the headteacher to account. For example, governors question the headteacher to check that additional government funding is used effectively. Governors also contribute to school improvement plans and check that staff pay is linked to performance and brings about improvement. By these means governors are very clear about the pupils' improved achievement and its now favourable comparison with similar schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All the staff promote helpful, kindly relationships and in response, pupils relate very warmly and supportively towards each other.
- Older pupils with additional responsibilities such as prefects and sports ambassadors diligently support other pupils, especially the youngest in the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because a few pupils need reminders about listening more carefully and starting work more quickly in lessons. At times pupils show excellent attitudes to learning, for

example, in the singing assembly singing their favourite 'Southampton, Southampton Song'.

- School records show that a very small number of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs occasionally present acts of unacceptable behaviour. Records also show that any incidents are managed very effectively by staff and that swift improvement has sustained pupils' typically good behaviour over time.
- The school is a warm, close-knit community where pupils and staff clearly feel proud of the way they strive to make best use of the wonderful new facilities. Consequently, pupils really enjoy school and have improved their attendance. The school continues to use popular reward systems such as the 'Headteacher's Award' successfully and, having secured average attendance, is now striving to lift it further. The pupils' great enjoyment of school is noted by parents and governors alike, who also express joy when observing the pride that pupils now have in their school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Staff are diligent in making sure that the detailed and regularly reviewed safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented consistently. For example, parents are kept fully informed about any accidents or incidents at school and also work in partnership with the school to keep pupils safe.
- Staff present impeccable role models to the pupils. They show sensitivity and great consideration when dealing with pupils' personal problems or incidents of unkindly behaviour. As a result, pupils say they feel very safe, know what to do to keep each other safe and enjoy happy, busy break times, especially outdoors.
- Pupils know about bullying and the forms that it can take, for example, cyber-bullying and verbal abuse. They confidently state that, 'Staff do not tolerate bullies and act quickly to deal with it.' Pupils reflect their good awareness by pointing out their posters displayed through the school which condemn bullying.
- Parents' responses in the school's questionnaire and parents interviewed by inspectors strongly confirmed that their children are kept very safe in school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good and reflects the considerable diligence of school leaders in raising teachers' skills and sustaining improvement over time through coaching and training opportunities.
- All staff promote supportive and productive relationships with the pupils which contribute significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Staff also encourage and value pupils' efforts and ideas, and these also enhance pupils' learning. Pupils say that they enjoy their learning because the teachers make activities interesting.
- Pupils learn well because teachers set work with different levels of challenge. In mathematics in Year 2, pupils followed clear 'steps to success' and a variety of criteria to sort a range of objects and shapes.
- All adults make good use of challenging questions to check pupils' understanding and to move their learning forwards. Pupils are often enthused by opportunities to discuss their ideas with each other. This was observed in Year 6 when pupils planned their imaginative thriller stories in the style of the author Antony Horowitz.
- Although improving, teaching and learning are not outstanding. This is because some teachers are better than others at giving pupils opportunities to respond quickly to the marking in the books to show that they understand and take responsibility for improving their own work. At times, teachers do not place enough emphasis on improving pupils' handwriting or number skills, and this restricts progress.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the good progress of pupils in the school. They demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of the pupils they work with. Teaching assistants are well deployed, often to support disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and others in receipt of additional funding.
- Reading is taught well, beginning with the high priority given to developing a secure understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) as children join in the Reception classes.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement has improved rapidly over the past 18 months. Pupils make good progress overall and achieve well. Attainment is now in line with the national average in reading and mathematics and,

although still below, much closer to what is expected nationally in writing.

- Overall standards are also higher across the school, with increasing numbers of pupils showing good skills and making better-than-expected progress.
- This improvement was identified in the most recent inspection in 2013, which noted that pupils were being helped to catch up quickly.
- Pupils' speaking and listening and reading skills are now developed effectively. For example, the pupils' improved performance in Year 1 and above-average performance in Year 2 phonic screening checks clearly show their accelerated progress in reading.
- The greater number of pupils' attaining above-average standards in reading assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6 further illustrates the pupils' improved reading skills. By the time they leave the school, pupils read competently for enjoyment and to learn.
- Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are well below levels typical for their age. They make an excellent start in response to strong teaching and engaging learning activities.
- Good teaching sustains pupils' good progress through the school. Increasingly, pupils are making faster progress. This is especially the case in Year 2 and 6, where they respond very well to challenging teaching.
- Most pupils are improving their writing and mathematical skills at a faster rate now than in the past. However, on occasion, pupils' often weaker handwriting skills still impede their progress in expressing their ideas as well as they would wish. Some pupils have difficulty recalling number facts to solve mathematical problems and this also constrains progress.
- Improved teaching and a more consistent level of challenge are quickening the progress of the most able pupils. Their good progress is evident in the above-average proportion of pupils attaining higher-than-expected levels, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils supported by additional funding receive extra adult help and also make good progress. On average, the attainment of pupils supported by additional funding matches that of other pupils in the school in reading and writing. It is about half a term behind in mathematics. Compared with their peers nationally, the attainment of pupils supported by additional funding in this school is about two terms ahead in mathematics and reading, and similar in writing. Adult guidance is now provided at an earlier stage than in the past and is closing this gap more quickly.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and others arriving later than the normal time from other schools make good progress. This is because staff provide support that is carefully delivered to meet their individual needs.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children demonstrate a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding on entry to Reception. Most often, their skill levels are well below those normally expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and is strongly supported by senior leaders. They ensure that on entry, younger children with summer birth dates have additional consideration in helping them to settle as confidently as their older classmates.
- Staff also sustain close links with the adjacent pre-school and with parents. They encourage and sustain children's excellent behaviour through praise and setting clear expectations that children understand. As a result, children make excellent progress.
- Staff work closely as a team to develop the children's interest in learning through well-established routines. For example, adults make sure that high-quality learning continues through 'tidy-up time' by encouraging children to talk about the equipment they have been using.
- Teaching and support are outstanding and make sure that children work very happily and learn with each other. For example, children share ideas, sort shapes and order numbers together to develop their mathematical skills very well during their first year at school.
- Staff combine carefully considered teaching and support with lively practical activity to capture the children's interest and enthusiasm and to develop their basic skills. For example, children made shopping lists during role play to extend their early writing skills. One child, said, 'I need eggs' and proceeded to sound out 'eggs' and write it out all by himself.
- Teachers make full use of the school's much-improved facilities, which now includes a generously equipped designated outdoor area. As a result, children now make rapid progress in extending their physical skills and widening their knowledge and understanding of the world.

- Staff check the children's progress carefully and keep meticulous records of how pupils are doing alongside samples of their work known as 'learning stories'. These are shared fully with the staff team and with parents. This ensures that learning activities are adapted when necessary to promote children's excellent progress in all areas of 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

Unique reference number	133704
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	449043

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	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Clarke
Headteacher	Karen Mellor
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 October 2012
Telephone number	02380 773363
Fax number	02380 775063
Email address	info@newlandsprimary.co.uk

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