

Newlands School

Waverley Road, Middleton, Manchester, M24 6JG

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher leads and drives school improvement effectively. She brings rigour to school management and inspires other school leaders and staff with her ambition and clear sense of direction.
- The robust pursuit of improvements in teaching and in meeting pupils' needs by leaders, governors and managers ensures the school maintains its good provision and pupils' good progress. Leaders are resolute in raising standards.
- The vast majority of parents support the school wholeheartedly. They are very impressed by the positive impact of its work on their children's development.
- Behaviour and safety is good overall, but pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Staff manage behaviour with consummate expertise. They know every pupil and what difficulties, if any, prevent them from behaving well. Planned approaches to managing behaviour are very effective.
- Leaders, governors and staff are extremely diligent in most respects at keeping pupils safe and ensuring pupils learn to how to stay safe.
- The excellent curriculum provides a breadth of experiences which are very relevant to pupils' needs and preparation for the future. Pupils find great enjoyment in their work and activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well.
- Teachers and their teaching assistants make assessments that pinpoint accurately where pupils start and where they are at any time in their learning. Pupils value their learning because teaching is lively, challenging and enjoyable.
- Pupils, from their different starting points and whatever their individual circumstances, make good progress and achieve well.
- The high expectations set by teachers and teaching assistants, their consummate knowledge of pupils and their needs, and their expertise at meeting pupils' needs all count significantly to pupils achieving well over time in all of their work.
- Children in the early years make good progress in all areas of learning but particularly in communication and language, and in their personal, social and emotional development. This prepares them well for Year 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not always precise when planning what pupils should learn or when providing resources to help them learn.
- There is not enough opportunity for the older, more able pupils to learn about safe use of the internet and social media.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in across the school. The headteacher joined an inspector in some of these observations.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, teachers, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- An inspector listened to a small group of pupils reading.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school’s documents including information on pupils’ progress, the school development plan, the school’s own evaluation of its work and policies and procedures for child protection and the safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to a small group of parents and took account of the views of 11 parents who completed Ofsted’s online questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered the school’s survey of parents’ views. The views of the 36 staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were examined.

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christine Potter

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a school for pupils with moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, which for many pupils adversely affects their physical abilities, speech, language and communication. Some pupils also have additional health complications. In addition to their learning difficulties, a significant proportion of pupils have autistic spectrum conditions. All of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- Early years provision is provided full time for children in Nursery and Reception Years.
- The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is well above average, as is the proportion new to speaking English.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school is co-located with Hollin Primary School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide sufficient opportunity for older, more able pupils to learn about and understand the risks involved in using the internet and social media.
- Ensure that all teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 are consistent and precise in what they want pupils to learn, and always make sure pupils have the necessary resources to hand to help them learn and make progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is driving improvement effectively and raising pupils' achievement. Leaders, governors and staff are fully signed up to the culture of high expectations. Staff, several of whom are recently appointed, are shaping up well as an expert and cohesive team across the school. Newly qualified teachers are settling extremely well and working effectively to support leaders' aims.
- Leaders, governors and staff are unequivocal in their promotion of equality of opportunity for pupils and robust in their stance on tackling discrimination. Safeguarding requirements are met. The attention given to safeguarding pupils ensures they stay safe even though more is needed to teach the few more able pupils about using the internet and social media.
- The headteacher has reorganised middle leaders into a smaller, well-briefed group with clear roles that ensure all of the key aspects of the school's provision are being well managed and continuously improved. In doing so, the headteacher has linked teachers' effective performance with promotion to posts of responsibility and better pay.
- Senior and middle leaders are a strong team sharply focused on effective management, improvement and keeping the school moving forward.
- Teachers and other staff are given clear routes to improving their work through the school's performance processes. They are supported by good opportunities for further training and qualifications; staff take up these opportunities with enthusiasm.
- Leaders' experienced and expert eye looks at the quality of teaching, skilfully identifying practice that can be made better and is astute at finding even the smallest change that can help to improve pupils' learning and progress. This ensures teaching over time is consistently good.
- Measures of pupils' attendance, behaviour and progress are constantly checked and rigorously analysed. This scrutiny equips leaders and teachers with information and insights that direct effective plans and actions to bring about improvement and, where possible, to halt decline when pupils sometimes fall behind.
- The local authority's good support provides a constructive overview of the school's work and facilitates links with other special schools. These links lead to shared curriculum developments and substantial checks on the accuracy of assessments of pupils' work between schools.
- Leaders give very careful consideration to spending and impact of the extra funding attached to the pupil premium and the primary physical education and sports premium. In both instances, they have made sensible decisions that have extended and enriched pupils' learning opportunities and increased their participation in physical activities and sports. The curriculum is greatly enriched as a consequence, leading to pupils' increased engagement in learning and enjoyment of school.
- The enormous investment made in developing and adapting pupils' work and activities means the curriculum is finely tailored to meeting pupils' needs in the widest sense. It prepares them well for the future and, as far as their capabilities permit, for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum provides pupils with the skills and attitudes they need for learning. Across all their work and activities, pupils are given many opportunities to use and develop the knowledge and skills they have learnt.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring their considerable experience and expertise to bear effectively on dealing with all of their responsibilities. They are very committed to the school, its improvement and continuing success. Governors lend their weight to ensuring leaders stay focused on moving the school forwards, and on achieving their ambitions. They know the school well, from their visits, their close attention to comprehensive reports supplied by leaders, and from their detailed discussions of the school's work. - Governors are knowledgeable and confident in questioning leaders, challenging them and maintaining high expectations. They apply rigour to ensuring all pupils make good progress and that teaching is managed effectively. When teachers are promoted they check that this reflects their good performance. Governors are rightly satisfied with the outcomes for pupils and the detailed explanations of how leaders have chosen to spend the pupil premium and the physical education and sports premium.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They quickly learn to like school and thoroughly enjoy each day's activities. This has a very positive effect on their attitudes to learning and behaviour. Parents say their children love school and are keen to come every day.
- Staff deal with pupils' behaviour very sensitively, anticipating problems early. This reassures pupils; they respond exceptionally well and, as a result, behaviour improves remarkably. Their outstanding behaviour prepares them very well for the future.
- The school's atmosphere is one of calm and there is a sense of purpose in how pupils conduct themselves. Many very well-planned opportunities throughout the day encourage pupils to take responsibility and be independent. They learn rules and behaviour that lead to good attitudes to learning. Pupils organise the books and equipment they need for a lesson. One pupil was encouraged to turn the page of his book by himself, which demanded of him a high degree of thought and action to achieve.
- Lunchtimes and playtimes are as much a time for learning as are lessons. They are rich in opportunities for pupils to further develop independence, social and physical skills. Staff are sharply focused on encouraging pupils to do things for themselves, such as playing together or collecting knives, forks and cups. When eating together in the dining hall, pupils are calm and exceptionally well behaved. On the playground, pupils can be relied upon to behave very well and treat each other with respect.
- In lessons, pupils settle quickly, are keen to learn and enthusiastically engage in their work. They sit together and listen attentively. They try hard to answer questions or show what they have learnt. When asked to get on with work on their own they do so diligently and with sustained effort. This makes them efficient at improving their knowledge and developing skills.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which provide meticulous detail about supporting pupils and keeping them safe.
- Leaders and governors check rigorously that the school's attention to safety is in accordance with school policy and is effective. Policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly which keep them closely aligned with current requirements.
- Staff undertake a wide range of training in order to keep up to date. This equips them extremely well to look after pupils' health and safety in relation to safeguarding, first aid, medical conditions, as well as the moving and handling of disabled pupils.
- Staff know pupils extremely well, have very good relationships with them and maintain clear daily routines. All of this contributes significantly to pupils staying safe and feeling safe.
- Pupils work and play alongside each other happily and become friends supported by the strong expectation they treat each other with kindness and respect. As a result, pupils are not bullied by others and they learn the difference between good and bad ways of treating others.
- Pupils learn to be aware of a wide range of risks, such as road safety and to recognise people who are friendly or not. However, this does not extend sufficiently to developing awareness of the risks in using the internet and social media. While this presents no immediate risks, the older more able pupils are not sufficiently aware of the potential risks and how to guard against these.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching throughout the school ensures pupils learn and make consistently good progress year after year.
- Leaders appoint talented new teachers and are effective in developing teachers' and teaching assistants' knowledge and skills. Classroom staff are keen to understand the impact of their teaching and to find ways of improving it further. This is increasing the school's effectiveness and, while the teaching teams' overall performance is currently good, leaders are effective in improving it further.
- Comprehensive assessment allows teachers to understand and tackle barriers to learning such as difficulties with listening, interacting, communicating and behaving well. Pupils who find this very difficult are well supported in small groups for a time until they have made enough progress to join their class full time. As a result, pupils are well prepared to learn and make progress.
- Most teachers use assessment information effectively to plan what pupils will learn. Some teachers are more experienced than others in pinpointing exactly the knowledge and skills pupils should gain by the

end of a lesson. As a result, some teaching is pitched perfectly with precise awareness of what pupils need to learn, but this is not always the case.

- Very occasionally, in Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers slip up by not planning enough resources for pupils. In mathematics, for example, a few pupils did not have enough rectangles, triangles and circles between them for both to match same shapes, so they could not finish their work. Several interactive whiteboards are mounted on walls too high for pupils to reach easily. So when they were asked to do something on the whiteboard this was difficult for some of them to achieve.
- Expectations are high. The work set for pupils makes good use of their existing knowledge and skills and challenges them to extend these a step further. Sufficient time is given to pupils to recall what they have already learnt in previous lessons and this ensures they gain a firm grasp on what they need to know and do before moving on. This provides pupils with a good level of challenge and promotes their progress.
- At the end of lessons, and at key points during lessons, teachers and their assistants help pupils to sum up what they have learnt. Well-framed questioning helps pupils think through what has been learnt and challenges them to think hard.
- English and mathematics are taught well overall with the result that many pupils learn to read, write and acquire a good range of mathematical skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils progress quickly from their starting points, achieving ambitious targets. Each group of pupils makes good progress. The substantial number of disadvantaged pupils who are supported through the pupil premium make the same good progress as others and there is no discernible gap in their overall performance.
- The data rigorously collected by leaders show the majority of pupils including those supported through the pupil premium make the progress expected by the end of Key Stage 2. A very small minority make more than expected progress, although the proportion of pupils making more than expected progress in personal, social and emotional development is higher.
- From early years onwards pupils are taught the attitudes and skills they need to learn effectively, such as communication and independence. Pupils gain the skills of working and learning together constructively. They develop self-confidence and grow to value learning and making progress.
- In keeping with their different capabilities, pupils communicate effectively with sounds and gestures and move on, where possible, to signing and using symbols with increasing sophistication. Those who are able to talk improve their speaking skills at a good rate. A few bypass their physical disabilities effectively by their skilful use of technological aids to speak and write. The good progress in learning to communicate by whatever means opens the door to learning in all subjects.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are at the heart of learning and, starting in early years, pupils develop and practise these skills constantly.
- The school is a book-rich environment and the encouragement to read is a strong incentive across the school. Pupils are motivated by seeing their progress through the stages of the reading scheme. The most able Year 5 and Year 6 pupils read fluently and with understanding, for example, adding expression when a character's speech is being read. Many pupils are able to sound out letters to help them read new and difficult words successfully.
- All pupils who have the capability to hold and control a pen make good progress by constantly practising writing. Pupils who do not get it right on the first attempt persevere and correct their work several times without prompts until they get it right. The most able pupils are challenged appropriately and progress to writing good sentences very legibly.
- From an early stage, pupils gain good mathematical knowledge and the language to talk about their work. Most pupils know basic numbers, can place them in order and count them. They know what triangles, squares and circles look like. The most able pupils can add and subtract, and they use these skills to solve simple mathematical problems.

The early years provision is good

- Early years provision is well led and managed with leaders setting high expectations for children to settle quickly and become actively engaged in all areas of learning. Detailed and accurate records are kept of children's progress and leaders' close checks on these ensure good rates of progress are maintained and that no children fall behind.

- Leaders ensure teachers and their assistants keep their knowledge and skills up to date. They work closely with other special schools on developing the curriculum and comparing assessments to check accuracy. New requirements for assessing children's progress are being tackled and the new procedures for assessing each child are almost complete.
- Parents are closely involved in supporting their children and staff keep them well informed about progress, especially when there is a significant breakthrough. Parents are overjoyed at the impact teaching has on their children's personal development, mentioning improvements seen in behaviour, communicating with symbols and using a knife and fork.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding and their attitudes to learning develop rapidly as a result of the high expectation of staff and the success with which children learn to listen well, contribute and cooperate with each other and staff. Children are kept safe and are extremely well supervised at all times.
- Teaching is good. Teachers' and classroom assistants' good teamwork leads to constant close observations of children as they learn and make progress. Ongoing assessment is used effectively to plan the next steps for each child. Teaching is lively and enjoyable for children. They respond with enthusiasm, are motivated and make good efforts with all of their work and activities.
- Children make good progress in all areas of learning and, importantly for the future, in communication and language as well as in personal, social and emotional development.

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	135201
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	448039

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Dutton
Headteacher	Deborah Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2012
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