

Newnham Primary School

School Hill, Newnham, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 3HG

Inspection dates

26–27 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The newly appointed principal has quickly won the trust of pupils, parents, staff and governors. He has provided much needed stability, while making rapid improvements at the school.
- The knowledgeable, experienced and appropriately trained governing body is well placed to continue to effectively monitor the work of the school.
- The David Ross Education Trust has supported well the school and its leaders. The academy improvement lead has helped to verify the quality of teaching, and teachers' judgements of pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Actions to improve the quality of teaching have been successful. The vast majority of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' conduct in classrooms, around the school and when playing on the playground is exemplary. Instances of poor behaviour and bullying are extremely rare.
- Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. There are a variety of extra-curricular activities available and opportunities to experience a residential visit in key stage 2.
- Pupils' attendance, which was previously too low, is improving considerably. Almost all pupils are now attending regularly.
- Pupils' outcomes have improved since the last inspection. Standards in the Year 1 phonics check and at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are at least above average.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have ensured that there is a robust system in place for staff to report any concerns they have regarding pupils' safety or welfare.
- Children in the early years make good progress. In 2017, every child achieved a good level of development. However, some children do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable because staff do not collect information on their achievements from parents as often as they could.
- Progress in subjects such as history and geography is not as strong as in English and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the leaders' evaluation and monitoring of subjects other than English and mathematics, to ensure that pupils' progress and attainment are equally strong in all subjects.
- Further improve the partnership with parents in order to enhance children's achievement in the early years.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since his appointment in November 2016, the principal has gained the overwhelming support of pupils, parents, governors and staff. He has brought much needed stability to the school, while moving it forward at a rapid pace.
- The principal, staff and governors have created a warm, inclusive and nurturing school. Adults know pupils and their families very well, leading to a 'family feel' where pupils thrive. One parent said, 'Quite simply, I wouldn't want my children to be taught anywhere else.'
- The principal tracks closely and frequently the progress of different groups of pupils through the school year in reading, writing and mathematics. This information is used effectively by teachers to ensure that the next steps in pupils' learning are planned for carefully. Governors are kept up to date with the progress of different groups of pupils through detailed termly reports.
- Leaders and governors know well the school's strengths and areas for development. The school improvement plan highlights clearly what actions are to be taken, by whom and when. The school's self-evaluation is accurate because relevant pieces of evidence are examined carefully that enable leaders to identify accurately what the next steps are for the school.
- Leaders have developed a broad and balanced curriculum that provides equal opportunities for all and helps pupils to broaden their experience of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Therefore, they are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a good understanding of British values. For example, they talked enthusiastically about their democratically elected school parliament.
- The principal checks carefully on the work of other staff. For example, the analysis of assessment information, lesson observations and work scrutiny all give valuable information on how a certain aspect of the school is working. Feedback given to teachers after such monitoring activity is detailed, useful and welcomed.
- Leaders responsible for English and mathematics are well organised and knowledgeable. Effective action plans and the frequent analysis of pupils' assessment information ensure that leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and development areas in these subjects. For example, recent changes to pupils' reading sessions, incorporating regular comprehension activities, have led to standards in reading rising across the school.
- Leaders allocate and monitor the impact of funding for disadvantaged pupils well. They are particularly aware of the importance of ensuring that the most able disadvantaged pupils receive the support to which they are entitled. Current disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Performance management procedures are effective. The principal, teachers and teaching assistants are set ambitious targets relating to priorities in the school improvement plan, the progress of pupils and developing additional responsibilities where appropriate.

- Leaders responsible for the early years and for the provision for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have received good support from the trust. This support has helped to ensure that these pupils are making good progress from their various starting points.
- The additional physical education (PE) and sport premium has been spent effectively. Rates of pupils' participation and the number of competitions against other schools have increased significantly over recent years. The school is currently the small school champions in rugby and football. Pupils enjoy taking part in the winter and summer cups that encompass hockey, rounders, cricket and athletics. Pupils have the opportunity to try a diverse range of activities, including ultimate Frisbee, dodgeball, curling, archery and cheerleading. The school has developed strong links with the local sports partnership and the two local professional cricket and rugby teams.
- The trust offers good support to leaders and governors. The academy improvement lead frequently visits the school to help verify judgements made by leaders about, for example, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The trust has supported the school with appropriate staff and governor training, as well as standardising the assessment procedures so pupils' work is moderated with other schools from within the trust.
- Staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire expressed very positive views of the school's leadership, believing unanimously that the school was improving rapidly and that leaders treat them fairly and with respect.
- The leadership, monitoring and evaluation of subjects other than English and mathematics are not as effective as they could be. Leaders are, therefore, not clear as to pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a good mix of skills that challenge and support the strategic development of the school. Governors know the school's strengths and areas needing improvement very well, and monitor the progress of actions on the school improvement plan closely.
- Governors check the work of the school frequently. Termly 'review weeks' allow governors the opportunity to visit the school and complete a monitoring activity. Recent examples include checking on pupils' standards in mathematics and writing. Once these monitoring activities have been completed, detailed reports are written and fed back to remaining governors at the next meeting. Consequently, all governors are kept up to date with any issues that arise.
- Governors also complete informal learning walks during each term. These focus on areas such as pupils' behaviour and the marking of pupils' work. The chair of the governing body and principal meet at least fortnightly to discuss any issues that have arisen. Governors, therefore, have a clear and up-to-date understanding of the school.
- Governors have received appropriate training on safeguarding and the safer recruitment of staff. The chair of the governing body, in particular, has a good understanding of child protection and is therefore well placed to ensure that policies and procedures are robust and that pupils are kept safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and there is a strong safeguarding culture within the school. Staff have received appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. Consequently, they are aware of the dangers posed to pupils through potential radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders ensure that thorough checks are made on volunteers and new staff before they are allowed to work with pupils. The single central record is well maintained, updated and monitored by knowledgeable members of staff.
- The designated safeguarding leads are well trained. There is a strong system in place for staff to record any concerns they have regarding pupils' safety or welfare. Records are kept securely and show clearly that any child or family that requires extra support receives it in a timely fashion.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection and is now good across the school.
- A consistent approach exists across key stages 1 and 2 regarding the planning, delivery and assessment of lessons in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are clear about what is expected of them and leaders check that the systems are used effectively.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar skills are taught well. Pupils are given regular opportunities to use these skills in pieces of extended writing in English and other subjects across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils make good progress in writing.
- Teachers apply the school's marking and feedback policy well. Teachers give good guidance to pupils on how they can improve. Pupils take note of this advice and frequently act upon it.
- Pupils, including the most able pupils, are encouraged to set their own level of challenge, especially in mathematics. For example, in Years 3 and 4, some most able pupils decided to test themselves by choosing the dice with the highest numbers when calculating negative numbers. The teacher successfully deepened pupils' knowledge of this topic by setting some 'real life' problems involving an overdrawn bank account.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well, especially in the early years and Year 1. They provide good support to pupils who require extra help and encourage independence by allowing some activities to be completed solely by the pupil.
- The learning environment is bright and stimulating throughout the school. There are imaginative displays and encouraging quotes on the walls reminding pupils, for example, to 'Never let anyone dull your sparkle!' Pupils' work is proudly displayed around the school and soothing music played in communal areas adds to the calm, purposeful atmosphere.
- Pupils across the school enjoy reading and read both at school and at home. Younger pupils use their phonics skills to decode unfamiliar words and pupils in Years 5 and 6 talked enthusiastically about their favourite authors, including David Walliams and

Philip Pullman.

- Homework activities are a mixture of weekly spellings, times tables and longer, topic-based projects for pupils to complete over the term. Their enjoyment of these projects is seen, for example, in the carefully crafted igloos made from marshmallows and polystyrene that are on display in the main corridor.
- End of year reports contain an overview of the wider curriculum taught each term, plus teachers' comments and pupils' targets in English, mathematics and science. There are spaces available for pupils' comments and a personal, encouraging comment from the principal. Parents are therefore kept well informed of their child's progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are eager, resilient and confident learners. Classrooms are calm and have a harmonious atmosphere, where pupils thrive and work together extremely well. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and are keen to discuss the activities they are undertaking. They told the inspector they enjoy school and feel happy and safe.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain, speaking knowledgeably about faiths and places of worship different to their own. Pupils are clear about the meanings of the school values of courage, kindness, wisdom, dedication and justice. These values are discussed in weekly school assemblies. Pupils have a strong understanding of equality and divergence and are welcoming towards visitors or new pupils. One pupil remarked, 'Anyone who joins our school becomes part of our family.'
- Pupils enjoy the responsibility of being play leaders at lunchtime, and elected members of the school parliament and of the school council. Recently, the school council has been responsible for the organisation of a healthy tuck shop. There are also opportunities for pupils to become house captains and head boy or head girl. These positions come with the extra responsibility of showing visitors around the school.
- Pupils enjoy the rewards they receive in achievement assemblies. Here, proud parents are invited to watch pupils receive various rewards, including star writer and star mathematician of the week. Other certificates are awarded to pupils who have been particularly thoughtful, respectful or polite.
- Pupils particularly enjoy the wide variety of sporting opportunities on offer to them. They spoke enthusiastically about singing at the Albert Hall and pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were particularly looking forward to their upcoming outdoor, adventurous residential visit to Longtown.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, but are less sure about the different types of bullying that can exist, or of the reasons why some groups of people may be bullied.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils display exemplary conduct in classrooms, around school and when playing outside at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They treat each other, staff and visitors politely and respectfully, for example by holding doors open and cheerfully greeting visitors who enter their classrooms. A pupil told the inspector that 'Everyone always behaves brilliantly at this school!'
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to school and understand how to be successful learners. As a result, incidents of low-level disruption in classes are extremely rare, and pupils make strong progress.
- Pupils show respect for equipment and resources that belong to the school. They keep classrooms and shared areas neat and tidy without prompting from adults.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely positive. Pupils respond quickly to instructions, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. During the inspection, a whole-school assembly was observed in which pupils sensibly and maturely answered questions posed by the teacher, sat thoughtfully during the reflection time and left the hall in a quiet and orderly manner.
- Attendance has improved recently. Current information provided by the school indicates that attendance is now above the national average for all groups of pupils. There have been no fixed-term exclusions over recent years and rates of persistent absence are low.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, outcomes for pupils have improved considerably in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check have been well above the national averages over recent years.
- In 2017, by the end of key stage 1, the proportions of pupils achieving at the expected standard and at a greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics were above national averages. Pupils are, therefore, prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- In 2017, the provisional assessment information shows that Year 6 pupils made faster progress than other pupils nationally in reading and writing. They did, however, make slightly slower progress than other pupils nationally in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving at the higher standard was broadly in line with other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence and current assessment information provided by the school indicate that large proportions of current pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good, and sometimes very good, progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Large proportions of current pupils are also working at age-related expectations or above in these subjects.
- Attainment and progress in subjects such as history and geography are not as strong as in English and mathematics. Some pupils do not develop the understanding and

skills appropriate for their age in these subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the Reception class with knowledge and skills broadly typical for their age. Staff visit children in their nursery setting and at home prior to them starting at the school. There are good links with outside agencies, for example the school nurse and educational psychologist. Consequently, staff have a good knowledge of children before they start school. This helps children to settle quickly and make good progress.
- Attainment has improved rapidly in recent years. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been consistently above the national average, with 100% achieving the required standard in 2017.
- Staff assess children frequently and accurately in a wide range of areas, including reading, writing and number. This information enables staff to have an up-to-date and accurate picture of children's abilities and, therefore, to plan carefully for the next steps in their learning.
- Leadership in the early years is strong. There is a very good understanding of the strengths and development areas within the provision. The early years leader is well supported by knowledgeable and skilful teaching assistants and has welcomed support and advice offered by the trust.
- The indoor and outdoor learning areas are both welcoming and stimulating, covering all the areas of learning. There are many opportunities for children to develop their writing and number skills. One group were particularly enjoying 'science' as they patiently transferred water from the water tray, down a long tube and into another container.
- Children concentrate for a sustained period of time because the activities are interesting and stimulating. For example, linked to the topic of 'polar explorer', two children were busy building a model igloo, while another proudly showed off a drawing of a penguin.
- Children's behaviour while completing activities is good. This is because the highly competent staff ask skilful questions in order to deepen children's knowledge and understanding. This was particularly evident during a class discussion about what the Inuit people eat and wear.
- Reception children are taught regularly with pupils in Year 1. Consequently, they are well prepared for the transition into Year 1 because the staff and routines remain consistent and the expectations of behaviour are high.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff have had appropriate training and are well aware of the procedures that are in place to report any safeguarding concerns they may have. As a result, children feel and are kept safe. Parents are equally positive about the provision in the early years as they are about the provision in the rest of the school.
- Some children do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable. Leaders acknowledge that more could be done to enhance the way in which the school works with parents in promoting their children's achievement.

School details

Unique reference number	140060
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10031189

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Huckin
Principal	Solomon Johnson
Telephone number	01327 705053
Website	www.newnhamacademy.co.uk/
Email address	admin@newnhamacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 July 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is part of the David Ross Education Trust. The principal joined the school in November 2016.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are much lower than national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in all classes and examined a wide variety of pupils' books from a range of subjects.
- The inspector held a range of meetings with the principal and assistant headteacher, subject and other leaders, the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body, and a representative from the trust. He spoke with pupils in groups, in lessons and around the school and listened to them read.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including minutes of governing body meetings, current assessment information provided by the school, the school development plan, plans written by English and mathematics subject leaders and records relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector gained the views of parents by talking with them before school and taking into account the 21 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and 24 responses to the parent text service. There were also five responses to the staff survey that were taken into account. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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