

# Newton Primary School

Hall Lane, Newton, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 5TL

## Inspection dates

1–2 November 2017

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b> |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b> |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The previous headteacher led the school with good judgement and determination through a turbulent period of underachievement. She was well supported by the local authority and made rapid improvements.
- Governors have ensured that the school has continued to improve with the carefully considered appointment of the current executive headteacher. Leaders are ambitious for further improvements.
- Governors are effective in their role and hold the school's leaders to account. They are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Leaders' checks on the impact of the school improvement plan do not focus enough on the difference it is making to the quality of teaching and learning. Too often, success is measured by the actions taken rather than the impact of these actions on pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is carefully planned and covers a wide variety of subjects and prepares children well for life in modern Britain.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and governors make sure that systems are in place and pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They use skilful questioning to move learning forward.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They listen carefully to instructions from adults and support each other in their learning.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average.
- In mathematics, tasks are not consistently well matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils need more opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children make good progress from their starting points because of the exciting curriculum and opportunities provided.

## Full report

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

- Improve leaders' effectiveness in monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's performance by ensuring:
  - that the actions detailed in school improvement planning are monitored and evaluated regularly for their impact on pupils' learning
  - that records made following monitoring and evaluation activities clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and that these are used to drive further improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, thereby, increase the rates of progress and attainment by:
  - ensuring that the work set by teachers is consistently well-matched to pupils' abilities, particularly the most-able in mathematics.
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the last inspection, the school has had several changes of headteacher, including another change in leadership in September. However, the strategic leadership of the previous headteacher was effective in significantly raising standards. The current executive headteacher and her deputy are continuing to have a positive effect on the school.
- The school's self-assessment provides an accurate account of strengths and areas to improve. Over the past two years, information about pupils' outcomes and progress is strategically used to identify priorities and to inform actions. Consequently, pupils' progress and attainment have significantly risen.
- Senior leaders have communicated the school's vision of 'Together We Can' successfully. This is creatively woven through 'The Newton Values' and the theme-based curriculum design. This ensures that pupils have memorable experiences which enhance their learning. Careful planning ensures that topics are rotated so as to avoid repetition in the mixed-age classes. This approach prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and also for life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders use the school's performance management systems and procedures to promote good practice and improve pupils' outcomes. Performance targets are closely linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan. Staff are supported well to help them meet these targets. Where necessary, underperformance is addressed and extra support is put in place.
- The local authority has provided effective support to the school. The school's adviser has been diligent in checking that her work has a positive impact. She has ensured that current leaders are in a position to continue the school's development with a much-reduced level of support in the future.
- The leader for special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective because she knows the individual needs and backgrounds of pupils. She ensures that any additional help provided meets their needs. As a result, the vast majority make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points. The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved and is now in line with national average.
- Leaders use the pupil premium effectively. They track the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and target additional support according to individual needs. School information shows that more disadvantaged pupils are now making good progress. The attendance of this group is also improving. It is now in line with the national average. Effective use of the physical education (PE) and sports funding is increasing participation in a variety of sports.
- Leaders do not consistently focus on how successfully the school improvement plan is driving improvement when monitoring and evaluating school improvement. When leaders check the impact of actions taken to improve the school, they do not always identify precisely the factors that are preventing even better outcomes. This means that weaknesses are not always quickly addressed or resolved.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have a very clear vision for the school's future. They are conscious of the need for stability in leadership and have acted accordingly with the recent appointment of a strong, experienced executive headteacher. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities and hold an accurate view of the school.
- Governors are effective in holding leaders to account for school improvement. They carefully consider information about the school's performance and readily raise questions about any issues that require explanation. Governors check closely the use of additional funds such as the pupil premium. They receive updates on the outcomes for different groups of pupils and watch their progress. Their involvement in school development has been successful in supporting recent improvements.
- Individual governors are linked with different curriculum subjects. They take these responsibilities seriously. The working relationship between teachers and governors is positive. This allows critical yet friendly visits to take place. Governors check on the accuracy of information through visits to the school and discussions with subject leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all statutory requirements with regard to recruitment are met. Records show that concerns are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner. They are thorough and illustrate the steps taken to secure pupils' safety and welfare.
- Staff and governors receive regular training in safeguarding. Relevant updates and issues are discussed every week at staff meetings. Pupils, and the vast majority of their parents, agree that the school is a safe place to learn.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe in a variety of situations. They have a very good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet and the importance of keeping healthy. Lessons are backed up with discussions and presentations in assemblies. Pupils have a very good understanding of what bullying is. They say that incidents are rare and effectively dealt with by the anti-bullying ambassadors and adults in school.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers and teaching assistants' expectations of pupils have risen significantly in the past two years. Pupils are eager to reach these high expectations and this has helped to raise standards significantly, particularly in key stage 2.
- Pupils are given time to think and respond to the skilful questioning of teachers, allowing them to deepen their understanding of key concepts. They are also given time to reflect on and respond to teachers' precise feedback. As a result, pupils are gaining insight into how well they are learning. This motivates them and the vast majority are making progress which is at least good.

- Teachers' good subject knowledge is evident in their modelling of correct vocabulary. Pupils are expected to be equally as precise in their responses. As a result, their spoken vocabulary as well as that in their writing are improving rapidly. Pupils are given opportunities to write at length across a range of subjects and this is helping to embed their grammar skills and growing vocabulary.
- Pupils receive good quality phonics teaching. Teachers and teaching assistants model letter sounds clearly, allowing pupils to acquire key early reading and writing skills. They use their phonics knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words and to help them in their writing.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are keen to share and discuss their books with classroom visitors. Connections with their own lives and experiences are naturally made as they read. This helps them to develop a good understanding of the texts. For example, while reading a story about a family on the beach, a pupil remembered a similar experience in her own life which helped her to relate to the feelings of the characters in the story. Responses such as this are leading to significantly higher standards in reading.
- Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' past learning to plan lessons and tasks which are usually well matched to their ability. Most children are sufficiently challenged, allowing them to make at least good progress. However, sometimes the most able, particularly in mathematics, are not challenged from the beginning of the lesson. When this happens, some time is wasted completing tasks which are too easy before the pupils move on to more challenging work. Therefore, progress is not always as quick as it could be for this group.
- Pupils are not consistently given enough opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics. As a result, they are not always confident in explaining their thinking or understanding about mathematical concepts in order to deepen their knowledge.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between adults and pupils in the school are positive, and, as a result, pupils demonstrate a good level of social awareness and skill. They work cooperatively, supporting one another's learning both inside and out of the classroom.
- Pupils have been taught to become resilient learners because of the interventions put in place by the previous headteacher. Pupils say that they now have more positive attitudes towards their work. In lessons, they demonstrate a willingness to learn and share their ideas even if they are not sure if they are right. As a result, standards have risen significantly.
- Pupils feel safe at school and understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when online. They value the support provided by the playground ambassadors, who are trained to help their peers with minor issues at playtimes.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and well-mannered throughout the school. The vast majority of pupils respond quickly and appropriately to adults' instructions, including during playtimes and lunchtimes. Consequently, very little learning time is lost.
- Behaviour logs from the past two years show a significant reduction in the number of incidents of poor behaviour and none were seen during the inspection. The pupils say that behaviour has improved and that school is now 'a nice place to be'.
- Overall, behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils consider the views of others and support one another in learning. Occasionally, when tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities, there is some low-level disruption. However, teachers are prompt to address any signs of misbehaviour and pupils are quick to respond because relationships are so positive. Pupils take pride in their appearance and in their school.
- Attendance is in line with the national average, with pupils arriving punctually and ready to learn. Leaders have successfully addressed the low attendance of the disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In 2017, attendance for these groups was broadly in line with the national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

### Good

- Children enter the early years with levels of development which are typical for their age. From these starting points, children make good progress and the vast majority enter Year 1 with a good level of development.
- The school's information shows that, in 2017, the proportion of Year 1 pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics was above the national average. All of the Year 1 children who did not meet the standard in 2016 did so in Year 2.
- By the end of key stage 1, in 2016, pupils' attainment at the expected standard was in line with the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions exceeding the expected standard were above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. School information for 2017 indicates similar achievement at the expected standard but a dip at the higher standard in mathematics. Currently, pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress, including the disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, from their starting points.
- By the end of key stage 2, in 2016, pupils' attainment at the expected standard was below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions exceeding the expected standard were also below average. However, school information for 2017 shows significant improvements. Pupils' attainment at the expected standard is now in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion exceeding the expected standard is now above the national average in reading and writing. It is still below for mathematics but there has been a significant improvement. Currently, pupils in key stage 2 are making rapid progress and are on track to achieve similar standards in reading and writing and further improved standards in mathematics.

- In recent years, in key stage 2, boys' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been below girls'. However, these gaps are rapidly closing as a result of targeted intervention by school leaders.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in the school is small. School information about their performance shows that the vast majority of disadvantaged pupils are now making accelerated progress over time from their starting points. This reflects the effective use of the pupil premium to support their learning.
- The number of pupils in the school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also small. School information confirms that attainment for these pupils is rising as a result of accurate assessment of their individual needs and timely, targeted intervention.
- The most able pupils, while attaining well, are not achieving as highly as they could. Opportunities are sometimes missed as tasks are not always matched to their abilities quickly enough, particularly in mathematics. As a result, some most-able pupils spend time on work which is too easy before being moved on to suitably challenging tasks.
- Work in current pupils' books shows that the vast majority are continuing to make at least good progress, regardless of ability or background, and reach the attainment which is expected for their age.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children in the early years get off to a good start in their education. Parents are fully involved in their induction to the school and they settle quickly into school life. There are strong links with the local nurseries, particularly with the one attached to the school.
- Provision in the early years is good because the leader has a strong understanding of the needs of young children. She is quick to assess children's development needs. Through encouragement and praise, she ensures that children think about what they are learning. Children are increasingly confident and able to talk with others about their thoughts and ideas.
- All activities provided have a clear purpose and all areas of learning are catered for both inside the classroom and outdoors. The opportunity to experiment with colour and create firework displays was very popular. It is clear that children are motivated and eager to join in activities. They play and work well with others and so develop a wide range of language and social skills.
- Children are inquisitive and keen to talk about what they are learning. For example, children constructing rockets clearly explained what they were doing and why. They proudly recited the first three lines of a poem they had been reading as a class. The children respond well to the stimulating environment created by the staff and show confidence in their attitudes towards learning.
- The learning environment is stimulating and provides multiple opportunities for children to practise key language and number skills. Adults encourage the children to develop their skills through modelling and correction when necessary. Early phonics, reading,

writing and mathematics skills are taught well. As a result, children make good progress.

- Staff monitor children's progress closely and ensure that judgements are secure through regular discussions and reviews of children's work. Most parents are actively involved with the school's assessment and reporting system. Leaders have targeted resources, such as the pupil premium, effectively allowing disadvantaged children to make good progress. The school moderates its assessments within a local cluster group.
- Children benefit from the positive relationships they have with adults and their older classmates. The younger children are keen to join in with the older pupils in their mixed-age class. This particularly supports the good progress of the more-able children in the early years.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective and statutory duties are met. There is a high level of parental engagement, which is actively promoted by the leader. Parents are invited to participate in 'Play and Stay' days which allow them to see what their children are learning. These are well attended.
- Overall, children make good progress from their starting points. Children's outcomes for the past three years have been improving and above the national average and they are well prepared for entering Year 1.



## School details

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Unique reference number | 112507     |
| Local authority         | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number       | 10037594   |

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

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                      | Primary  |
| School category                     | Maintained   |
| Age range of pupils                 | 4 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 149  |
| Appropriate authority               | Governing body   |
| Chair                               | Michael Green  |
| Headteacher                         | Kim Buxton   |
| Telephone number                    | 01773 872 384  |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.newton.derbyshire.sch.uk">www.newton.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>                 |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:headteacher@newton.derbyshire.sch.uk">headteacher@newton.derbyshire.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection         | 24–25 October 2012   |

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. However, the website is not easily navigated.
- The school has had several changes in leadership since the last inspection. The current executive headteacher has been in post since September 2017.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- As this is a smaller than average school, children are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Children attending the early years are educated in a mixed class with some Year 1 pupils. Children attend the Reception classes full-time.

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been in receipt of support from the local authority.
- 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.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 11 lessons, the vast majority jointly with the executive headteacher, across all classes. Work in pupils' books covering a range of subjects, abilities and year groups was looked at.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and with leaders responsible for the early years, special educational needs and/or disabilities, English and mathematics. The inspector also met with the family support worker.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils formally to consider their views of their school. She also spoke informally with pupils during lessons and during break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector considered the 17 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation including the leaders' self-assessment of the school's performance, the school improvement plan, governors' minutes and notes of visits, the school's most recent information on pupils' progress and achievement and information related to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Heidi Malliff, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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