

Newlaites Infant School

Langrigg Road, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 6DX

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school with strength, vision and compassion. Since the previous inspection, she has successfully maintained a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement.
- The governing body is strong. Governors know the school well, including its strengths and weaknesses. They provide effective support and challenge to senior leaders to bring about improvements.
- Pupils achieve overall outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 which compare favourably with the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress because of the focused support they receive from staff.
- Nursery and Reception provision is good and improving. Leadership is strong and children progress well. They learn much from well-planned teaching, including learning outdoors.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they are keen to learn. They are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and adults.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a significant strength. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Parents regard the school and its staff highly. They say that children behave well and are safe and secure because all staff place a very strong emphasis on keeping them safe.
- The vast majority of teaching, learning and assessment practice is strong. However, some teachers do not always match tasks carefully to the differing needs of pupils who need to catch up.
- Although standards have improved, pupils who need to catch up do not always make strong enough progress in writing.
- The monitoring role of new middle leaders is at an early stage of development. As a result, they do not always contribute consistently to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Overall, pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now above the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - new middle leaders develop the skills they need to monitor standards of teaching, learning and assessment within their subjects
 - teachers set tasks, particularly in writing, which match the learning needs of pupils who need to catch up.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school with strength, vision and compassion. Since the previous inspection, she has successfully maintained a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement. She has also maintained high staff morale in a year of huge change.
- School leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have acted decisively to provide a clear direction. This has led to improvements in all aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders make effective use of additional funding to improve outcomes for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders identify the learning and emotional needs of these pupils quickly and tailor teaching closely to individual need. Training for support staff, particularly in developing pupils' basic English and mathematics skills, has increased the impact that these staff have on pupils' learning. This ensures that this group of pupils makes good progress, given their starting points.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to diminish the difference between the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils nationally. Leaders successfully identify the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face. Additional teaching for those who need it is having a positive effect.
- The sport premium is used effectively. Leaders have based outcomes on four 'keys to success', which include organisation, persistence, confidence and getting along. All of these were clear in the physical education (PE) lessons observed.
- As a result of leaders' efforts to take into account pupils' views, the school council is an integral part of school life. This also means that pupils have many opportunities to learn about British values, such as democracy, and they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils constantly show values such as tolerance and respect in their everyday interactions with each other and with adults.
- The curriculum is varied and holds pupils' interest well. Pupils develop a range of skills across different subjects. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. A wide programme of visits and visitors to the school enrich the curriculum. For example, a visitor came to discuss the First World War with pupils, enabling them to show empathy for families who suffered as a result of the war. Pupils were able to articulate their feelings, showing a deep understanding of the subject. After-school clubs are well attended and reflect pupils' varied interests.
- Teaching staff are highly committed to the school. They have benefited from external support in areas such as mathematics and improving boys' writing. They appreciate senior leaders' investment in their professional development and all staff are confident that they have improved their professional practice. Training and development opportunities are now increasingly 'in house', led by the school's own staff team.
- The knowledgeable and well-organised leaders of English and mathematics have played a key role in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. They

continue to provide effective training and support for colleagues.

- The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as many of the parents who spoke to inspectors, are highly supportive of the school.
- The school has introduced a detailed performance-tracking system which clearly identifies pupils' attainment at different points in the year and how individual pupils are progressing. However, middle leaders do not always use it effectively in monitoring how well different groups achieve throughout the year.
- Many middle leaders are new to the school and new to their role. As a result they have not had the chance to develop monitoring skills in order to contribute well to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. However, the school already has mentors in place to improve this.

Governance of the school

- Governors have further strengthened their role in providing effective support and challenge for school leaders since the last inspection. Governors have a clear understanding of pupils' progress. They make regular visits to the school to meet school leaders at all levels and gain first-hand views of the life of the school.
- The governing body regularly seek the views of pupils when they evaluate the performance of the school or consider any changes to school life.
- Governors are keen and committed to the school and share the headteacher's aspirations. The local authority has provided suitable training and support.
- Governors regularly challenge senior leaders and set high standards for the headteacher through her performance management objectives.
- Governors ensure that the use of additional funds is appropriate so that staff provide the best possible help for pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is an extremely strong culture of promoting pupils' well-being and safety in the school.
- All staff take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously and look carefully for any signs that support is needed. Every member of staff is trained and up to date with the latest guidance on keeping children safe in education. Staff are committed to supporting pupils and their families.
- Every parent who spoke with inspectors or completed Ofsted's online questionnaire agrees that their child is safe in school.
- Staff receive regular training and updates to make sure that they are aware of current guidelines and legislation. They feel confident about recognising any sign of distress and know how to report any concerns should they arise. Pupils know that they can approach staff with any concerns because of the excellent relationships that exist between staff and pupils in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Good teaching has ensured that, from their low starting points, most pupils achieve expected outcomes by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2.
- Teaching across the school is consistent in leading to most pupils making good progress in all subjects. Teachers set high expectations for pupils' work, behaviour and conduct so that lessons are orderly and free from disruptive behaviour. They expect high standards of presentation in handwriting from an early age and pupils rise to the challenge.
- In lessons, pupils are actively engaged in their learning because teachers' planning brings the subject to life. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential. Teachers routinely check on pupils' progress during lessons.
- The most able pupils are well supported. For example, in Year 1 pupils who are confident readers begin to focus on extended writing, paying careful attention to capital letters and full stops.
- Teachers use questioning successfully to move learning on and to check what pupils already know and can do so that little learning time is missed. Work in pupils' books shows that the pace of learning is fast.
- The teaching of phonics is strong and has led to consistently high outcomes for pupils by the end of Year 1. Boys particularly make good progress in this area because of the effective support of teaching assistants. The development of pupils' understanding of how sounds and words are linked together is consistent due to the effective teaching and use of resources.
- Homework set for pupils coupled with guidance and workshops for parents ensures that pupils are able to consolidate and extend their learning at home.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable role in supporting pupils' learning across the school. Their subject knowledge has improved along with that of their teacher colleagues and they use this to carefully prompt and question pupils. The skilled contribution of teaching assistants enhances the support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, there are other pupils who need additional help in order to catch up. The support for these pupils is not always as effective as it could be.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders' unrelenting focus on very positive behaviour results in an all-pervading climate of care, safety and personal development for each and every child.
- Pupils consistently exhibit very positive attitudes to learning and are highly enthusiastic when talking about their work. Pupils that inspectors spoke to say that they thoroughly enjoy all their lessons without exception.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying or name-calling are very rare. They have full confidence in reporting incidents to a member of staff. They are extremely confident that they are listened to and that appropriate action is taken very quickly to resolve

any concerns.

- Pupils make an excellent contribution to school life. For example, older pupils confidently act as play leaders near the school's 'rainbow bench' at playtime. Members of the school council wear their badges with pride and give pupils a strong voice in the school. They regularly play an active role in the decision-making processes of the school. Pupils also offer their ideas about what is working well and how the school could be improved when they meet with governors. They are proud of their contribution to improving outdoor equipment for pupils.
- Pupils are humorous, lively and caring. They take pride in being part of this school. They are understanding of others' views, opinions and feelings. They display very mature attitudes to learning and all aspects of school life. They are confident and say that they feel very safe and well cared for. The vast majority of parents agree with this view.
- Well-devised activities in lessons help pupils to develop a clear understanding of how they can keep healthy through making healthy food choices and developing an active lifestyle.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have high aspirations for their own achievement and they are rightly proud of the work in their books. Work is nearly always neat and very well presented. The quality of work, particularly in English and mathematics, demonstrates excellent attitudes to learning as pupils complete given work with enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy working and little time is lost when learning. Pupils readily share ideas and listen attentively to others such as when discussing the most effective way to record data in a mathematics lesson.
- Pupils, including the youngest ones, get on very well together and they are unfailingly polite to each other and to visitors. There is a happy atmosphere when pupils play together at playtimes and lunchtimes. They are pleased with the new equipment that has been installed to help them be active at these times. They take turns and use the equipment sensibly.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school life and are very keen to earn awards, for example for good attendance and for making excellent efforts with their work. Levels of attendance are slightly above the national average. Due to the concerted efforts of pupils, parents and staff, fewer pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, now miss school on a regular basis. This is a considerable improvement on previous levels of persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Due to the efforts of the headteacher, improved teaching means that pupils make better progress. From starting points often below those typical for their age, pupils now make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At the end of key stage 1 in 2017, the overall attainment of pupils was broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in all three of these subjects is good as effective teaching ensures that pupils achieve good outcomes

relative to their starting points.

- The proportion of most-able pupils who are achieving the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 is improving. There has also been an improvement in the proportion of middle-ability pupils who achieve these standards.
- Most pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress as a result of effective early identification and effective additional support. Where they are not, the school has identified the ongoing barriers to learning and put in place additional measures to promote more rapid learning.
- Leaders use the funding to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. As a result, pupils' progress is improving steadily. The close focus on their needs has helped some to catch up with other pupils nationally, particularly in Year 1.
- In Reception classes, children make good progress from their different starting points and are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- Apart from a slight dip in 2016, pupils' ability to use phonics to read words by the end of Year 1 is consistently above average. All disadvantaged pupils' attainment in phonics was above average in 2017.
- Despite the many improvements in pupils' outcomes resulting from good leadership and provision, there are less successful outcomes in the attainment of those pupils who need to catch up. On occasion, the progress of this group of pupils is not rapid enough.

Early years provision

Good

- As a result of good teaching, children make at least good progress in early years. Children's skills, knowledge and understanding are below those typical for their age when they join the school. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- Outcomes in 2017 dipped after a three-year improving trend. This was due to turbulence in staffing that leaders have now dealt with. The new team is effective and assessment information and pupils' work show that progress from starting points is good for current pupils.
- The new early years leaders are experienced early years teachers and are developing their roles well. They have successfully managed the transition from two Reception classes to also including a Nursery class this year. They have created an effective place for children to learn where staff work very well together as a whole team, sharing expertise and resources.
- There is a very good learning environment that assists in children making strong gains in their learning. Children develop independence and choice in their learning. The learning environment supports them effectively across all learning areas, including the newly developed outdoor area.
- Good-quality, well-planned provision ensures that children progress well and are inquisitive learners and critical thinkers. Children clearly know the routines and respond very positively with good behaviour, kindness and support for each other.
- Children concentrate well during adult-led activities and those which they choose for themselves. This was clear when children in the construction area worked together to

build cars from of wooden planks. They persevered until everyone involved could fit into the cars.

- Behaviour is a strength. Those few children who were not working on the given task were quickly supported by staff. Children are respectful and show good manners, following the strong examples set by staff.
- Parents that inspectors spoke to say that staff settle children quickly and successfully and provide helpful information about children's learning.
- Staff have a good understanding of child protection and safeguarding.
- Leaders are aware that children who are disadvantaged have not made as much progress as other children in recent years. Steps taken have ensured that additional funding for this group is effectively used to enable disadvantaged pupils to make good progress from their starting points. As a result, the attainment of this group is approaching that of other children nationally.
- Staff encourage parents to be actively involved with their children's education at home by providing workshops and appropriate communication. Parents are extremely positive about the early years provision and staff. However, they could be involved more in the initial assessment of their children's capabilities.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 112226 |
| Local authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 10043220 |

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

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 180 |
| Appropriate authority | Local authority |
| Chair | Ian Smith |
| Headteacher | Julie Willows |
| Telephone number | 01228 525756 |
| Website | www.newinf.cumbria.sch.uk |
| Email address | secretary@newinf.cumbria.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 23–24 April 2013 |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Newlathes is smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have and/or disabilities is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons, of which five were jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and other activities. They also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff, and spoke to a group of pupils. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Inspectors met six governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents around the school. In addition, they evaluated 18 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors reviewed eight responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, as well as governing-body minutes, improvement plans and school information on pupils' recent attainment and progress.
- Inspectors considered behaviour and attendance information. They also looked at policies and procedures relating to SEN and/or disability, English as an additional language, the pupil premium funding, PE and sport premium funding, safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Simon Hunter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lisa Crausby

Ofsted Inspector

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