

Inspection of a good school: Newhaven Pupil Referral Unit

Newhaven Gardens, Eltham, Greenwich, London SE9 6HR

Inspection dates:

20–21 November 2019

Outcome

Newhaven Pupil Referral Unit continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils told us that this is 'a place where everyone sees who you really are'. Pupils spoke warmly of the friends that they have made, and how they help and support each other. Rebuilding pupils' enthusiasm for learning is a priority here. The small classes help pupils to regain confidence in themselves and their ability to do well.

Families and pupils agree that this is a safe school where pupils can thrive and succeed. When pupils have concerns, they have trusted adults that they can go to for help. Pupils value the individual support they receive to help them learn. Many have quickly gained new knowledge and confidence as a result. Staff expect all pupils to do well and aim high.

Most parents and carers are extremely happy with the school. They spoke positively about the difference the school has made for their children, both academically and personally. Typical comments included, 'the school has lifted a major weight from my mind', and that staff are 'exceptionally supportive'.

Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils show respect for each other and the adults who work with them. Any conflicts are quickly calmed. Bullying rarely occurs. When it does, pupils know that leaders deal with it effectively.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have a clear vision of what they want pupils to achieve. When pupils join Newhaven, most have had periods of non-attendance in their previous schools. Leaders know that this means some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Some pupils also have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff assess pupils on arrival. They work out what pupils know and can do. They use this information to design learning that supports pupils to achieve well and become confident in their own abilities.

Leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for pupils to achieve their potential. They aim to ensure that all pupils obtain qualifications that will help them to be successful beyond

the school. This includes prioritising English and mathematics. Staff know that some pupils struggle with their literacy skills, especially reading. Helping pupils to become more confident readers is a whole-school priority. Staff work successfully to reignite pupils' interest in reading. Pupils are ready to explore different types of texts and authors.

Leaders and staff plan well-sequenced steps of learning in English, mathematics and science. Teachers know what they want pupils to learn. They think carefully about how best to help pupils develop and deepen their understanding. In mathematics, for example, pupils use what they already know to develop their problem-solving skills. Teachers check pupils' understanding before moving on to new concepts. They make sure that pupils remember what they have been taught.

These strengths are not as well established in other subjects. Sometimes, planning is focused on following examination schemes. Teachers do not consider fully what pupils need to learn next in order to develop their knowledge in a purposeful way. When this happens, pupils lose interest in their work. They find it hard to link what they are learning with what they already know or can do.

Leaders make sure that pupils' learning is not limited to academic subjects. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of activities to support their wider development, including regular visits to local woodland areas. They also participate in a variety of school trips and competitive sports events.

Staff get to know each pupil exceptionally well. Leaders use what they know about pupils to make sure teachers have the right training. Staff receive effective guidance to help them understand pupils' specific barriers to learning well. As a result, pupils with SEND are supported skilfully by the staff team. Pupils' ability to manage their own behaviour and emotions improves after joining the school. They show respect for their friends, teachers and visitors.

Students in the sixth form benefit from a curriculum that prepares them well for later life. This includes helpful careers guidance and support. Ex-students remain part of the community. Many keep in touch with the school long after leaving and become role models for younger pupils. Leaders track where pupils and students go to when they leave the school and check how well they are doing. However, last year, too many pupils left the school without securing employment, further education or training.

Members of staff said that leaders care about their well-being as well as that of the pupils. Staff speak highly about the support they receive from senior leaders. This includes access to a clinical psychologist. They are proud to work at the school and feel valued. Staff told me that they enjoy working here. They appreciate that leaders are mindful of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure there is a strong ethos of safeguarding in the school. Staff are vigilant.

This goes beyond the school building, and includes support for pupils affected by domestic violence, gang affiliation and knife crime.

Leaders and staff are quick to pick up on any signs that a pupil may need more support. Staff share concerns promptly. They meet regularly to discuss safeguarding matters and ensure that any causes for concern are identified at the earliest possible stage. Leaders work closely with parents and other professionals to keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff work hard to rebuild pupils' interest in and enjoyment of learning. Pupils typically want to do well. However, planning in some subjects does not build as well as it should on pupils' prior learning and experiences. When this happens, pupils lose focus on their work. Leaders are taking effective steps to address this. Their plans for further changes over the next year are credible. Nevertheless, when planning learning, leaders and teachers should make sure that pupils connect what they are learning to what they already know or understand. This will help pupils to find their learning meaningful and relevant.
- Over time, the number of pupils leaving the school without plans for education, employment or training has reduced. However, it is still too high. Leaders should ensure that all pupils have access to appropriate placements when they leave the school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school is good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Newhaven Pupil Referral Unit to be good on 21 March 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100103
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10110430
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	12
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Yvonne Geddis
Headteacher	Jon Kelly
Website	www.newhavenschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2016

Information about this school

- Newhaven School is split across four settings. The Garden Site is for pupils who are at risk of, or have been, excluded from mainstream school. The NEST site provides support for pupils with mental health difficulties that prevent them from attending mainstream school. The King's Park Site is for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. Newhaven School is also responsible for the hospital school room at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
- The current interim headteacher has been in post since September 2019. Prior to taking up this position, he was the deputy headteacher at the school.
- During an initial six-week assessment, leaders decide how best to meet the academic, emotional and social needs of individual pupils.

Information about this inspection

- We met with a range of senior staff during the inspection, including the headteacher, the senior leadership team and members of the governing body.
- We looked deeply into three subjects during the inspection. These were English, mathematics and physical education. We met with a range of staff, pupils and leaders. We made visits to lessons, looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read. We also considered pupils' learning in other subjects.
- We took account of the 47 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- We gathered the views of parents by talking to four parents on the telephone. We also considered the responses from the 15 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View.
- We looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, external reports and safeguarding documents. We also evaluated information related to pupils' behaviour and wider development.
- We carried out a range of activities to look at safeguarding. These activities included meeting leaders, talking to staff, parents and pupils and reviewing a range of school documents and records.

Inspection team

Francis Gonzalez, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Diane Rochford	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Neary	Ofsted Inspector

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