

# Inspection of a good school: Newbottle Primary Academy

Houghton Road, Newbottle, Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear DH4 4EE

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 May 2022

## Outcome

Newbottle Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are incredibly happy here. There is a keen sense of belonging, nurtured over time. Pupils say that their teachers are the best thing about their school. This is because they are on hand to offer help and support. Strong and trusting relationships are evident in classrooms across the school.

Playtimes are harmonious. Sports coaches harness pupils' energy and promote teamwork and engagement. This continues in the classrooms. Here, pupils are keen to support one another. They receive lots of opportunities to work together and share ideas.

Leaders set high expectations for pupils to behave well. Pupils do not disappoint. They are courteous, always keen to hold open doors, and greet adults and friends with warm smiles. The 'kindness award' is a much-cherished recognition of their consideration.

Bullying is uncommon. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They know how important it is to tell someone.

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

The aims of the national curriculum form the core of the school's curriculum. This ensures its breadth and balance. Subject leaders keep their schemes of work under constant review. Adaptations were made to take account of the knowledge pupils missed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Content choices make sure that pupils' learning builds on what they already know. It is tailored to meet the needs and interests of pupils. Activities are planned effectively to make sure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can learn alongside their classmates.

In mathematics, leaders make sure that pupils have secure knowledge. Pupils are highly engaged in lessons. They enjoy the many opportunities they get to work together and to talk about their learning. Pupils have a good grasp of calculation methods. Lessons build pupils' knowledge step by step. To this end, teaching is effective. Teachers plan to do

more-demanding tasks, but pupils do not always get on to them. Opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding are therefore not taken as often as they could.

In history, leaders map concepts such as chronology and comparison across all topics. This helps pupils build a secure bank of knowledge and a deepening understanding. This is nurturing their love of the subject. For example, pupils in Year 4 talked about their learning of Stone Age Britain. They could use this to make comparisons with life for the Vikings. They can recall important knowledge with confidence. More-complex concepts such as sovereignty and parliament need further development.

Leaders have worked hard to improve their approaches to the teaching of reading. They have invested in a new scheme for the teaching of phonics. Teachers received intense training to make sure their lessons follow the same format. This is helping more pupils in Year 1 to be confident to use their phonic knowledge to read books expected for their age. Leaders make sure that older pupils who may have missed some phonics teaching catch up quickly. This year all pupils will start key stage 2 with the phonics knowledge they need to be confident readers.

Pupils receive a discrete lesson to develop wider reading skills. Texts that pupils study come from a range of assorted styles. Teachers link their stories to other subjects to support wider learning when appropriate. For example: pupils in Year 3 used facts from myths they had studied for recall in history. Teachers make sure that pupils build their reading comprehension skills step by step. Some reading lessons are not organised so pupils access more-demanding questions. This means that pupils do not always make the progress they could in these sessions.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' personal development. They have invested in staff and pupils' training. A team of staff and pupil well-being champions are supporting the return to school life. Pupil champions take their roles seriously. They show a mature understanding of their role. They are on hand each day to offer their support to peers. After-school clubs are returning to the pre-pandemic offer.

Children in the early years are happy and settled. The early years environment is vibrant and well resourced. Developing children's listening and personal skills are a key priority for leaders. This is paying dividends. Children are catching up from their missed early years experiences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Children are acquiring early reading skills well. Wider curriculum plans are aligned to statutory requirements. Some subject leaders are beginning to monitor the links between foundational knowledge in the early years to the curriculum subjects they will learn in key stage 1. However, this is not the case for all subjects.

Leaders invest in their staff. They place great emphasis on providing high-quality training opportunities. They give staff time to work together. Staff value the opportunities they receive. Staff morale is high, which contributes to the ethos of this happy school.

Governors are skilled. They know the school well and offer professional challenge and support. This helps leaders to be highly reflective practitioners and maintain their drive for continuous improvement.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff undertake regular training to make sure their knowledge of how to keep pupils safe is recent and relevant. The procedures for reporting concerns are well understood by all.

Record-keeping is meticulous. Leaders review records regularly to spot any signs of emerging needs. Leaders work well with other agencies to make sure support is timely and appropriate when needed.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They talk confidently about how to do so online. They are confident that if they have any concerns staff would support them.

Leaders are equally vigilant on managing pupils' absence. Attendance procedures are robust. Leaders make sure they follow up immediately on any pupils not in school.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some lessons there are missed opportunities for pupils to be working at the higher level and completing activities that are more demanding. This means that pupils do not make the progress they could towards deepening their understanding. Leaders need to further refine their curriculum plans so that pupils can work more regularly on complex concepts in a range of subjects.
- Changes to the early years curriculum are in the earliest stages of implementation. Not all subject leaders know if the early years curriculum is suitably sequenced to prepare children for the demands of key stage 1. Subject leaders must ensure they monitor the curriculum in the early years, so that key foundational knowledge and skills for their subjects are embedded.

## 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 remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140584
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211234
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	466
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Pat Dutton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Shield
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.newbottleprimaryacademy.co.uk">www.newbottleprimaryacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 – 19 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Aim High Multi Academy Trust.
- The school is larger than average. It has two classes in each year group.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with the subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils, and looked at pupils' work. The inspector reviewed a sample of books in science and geography.
- The inspector met with a group of teachers to get their views on the curriculum and to discuss safeguarding arrangements
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, and those leaders responsible for attendance and personal development.

- The inspector met with a group of governors, through a remote meeting.
- The inspector took account of 97 responses to Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Diane Buckle, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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