

Inspection of Newton Road School

Newton Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire NN10 0HH

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff at this school know pupils and their families well. Leaders, teachers and support staff care for pupils and build strong bonds with them. Pupils said that school is fun and that their teachers are kind. The caring and nurturing culture at Newton Road School enables pupils to feel safe and happy.

Pupils and staff agree that this school is getting better. The education provided in early years and in core subjects is of a good quality. This is not yet the case for several foundation subjects.

The school's PRIDE (positivity, respect, integrity, determination, excellence) values underpin the work of the school. Teachers help pupils to demonstrate these values. This is one way in which the school is trying to instil high expectations for all.

Many pupils know that there are some children who need more support than others, and that this is normal. Pupils develop acceptance of those who are different from themselves.

Most pupils understand what bullying is. They know that it can happen here. They are very confident in speaking to adults if they suspect it. Pupils know that staff do not tolerate bullying and that when it occurs, staff deal with it.

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

Leaders have worked closely with the trust to redesign the curriculum. The curriculum encompasses a range of subjects. In core subjects, such as mathematics, there has been careful thought and consideration about the important knowledge pupils need to know. Subject leaders have thought about how this knowledge builds towards larger concepts. In these subjects, pupils build a depth of understanding. Leaders have not identified the key knowledge in several foundation subjects. As a result, pupils do not build a depth of understanding in all subjects.

Teachers receive training to develop their subject knowledge in some subjects. Teachers present information clearly and match activities closely to what pupils need to learn. This helps pupils achieve and learn. In several foundation subjects, some teachers still need further training, so that they have the subject knowledge to teach some subjects more effectively.

Leaders are in the early stages of developing ways to assess what pupils know in the foundation subjects. In these subjects, teachers do not systematically check what pupils know. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are not always identified. Some pupils struggle to build on their prior knowledge as a result.

Leaders ensure that they are ambitious for all pupils. There is a particular focus on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers have

received training on how best to support pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND are extremely well supported by staff so they can achieve as well as other pupils.

There are strong routines in early years, so children learn to self-regulate quickly. Children take turns to wash their hands as they prepare to go to lunch. Routines like this help pupils develop socially as well as developing their understanding of hygiene. Adults encourage children to engage with different activities and to talk about what they are doing. This helps children develop early communication. Children in early years are well prepared for key stage 1.

There is a well-planned approach to teaching pupils how to read. Children start to read as soon as they start in Reception Year. Teachers remind them to use pure sounds. A dedicated early reading teaching assistant intervenes if assessment shows that a pupil is falling behind. This helps all pupils to keep up. The books that pupils read match the sounds that pupils know. Pupils become better and more fluent readers. The core list exposes pupils to books of different genres and helps them to develop their moral and cultural understanding. Pupils at the school develop a love of reading.

Most pupils agree that behaviour in school is good. Pupils enjoy collecting 'forest points' when they show positive behaviour. Consistent classroom rules are understood by pupils. As a result, low-level disruption is minimal and teachers deal with it when it occurs.

There is a strong focus on teaching pupils about staying safe and behaving responsibly. Pupils learn about different types of family and the protected characteristics. A particular strength of the school is the pastoral care it provides for its pupils.

Most staff agree that the school has improved in recent years. Staff feel well supported by leaders. Staff know that leaders take their workload and well-being into consideration. Trustees, trust leaders and the local committee fulfil their statutory duties and provide effective support and challenge to leaders. This is helping leaders improve the school further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders triage and check all the concerns that staff report. They deploy appropriate and swift actions to keep pupils safe. Leaders have trained all staff to be vigilant. Staff understand that no concern is too small. Staff are aware of contextual safeguarding issues. For example, they know the typical signs of child criminal exploitation.

Leaders know that the more vulnerable pupils are at higher risk of harm. They work with these pupils and their families closely. Leaders work in partnership with external agencies to ensure that these pupils and families receive the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have outlined the key concepts and ideas they want pupils to know in the foundation subjects. The knowledge that underpins these concepts is not precisely identified in several foundation subjects. Teachers do not teach this knowledge explicitly and pupils do not have the building blocks to understand the identified concepts. Leaders must ensure that the most important knowledge that underpins concepts they want pupils to understand is identified.
- Some teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to teach some of the foundation subjects. As a result, they do not always present information clearly or choose activities that help pupils learn the intended curriculum. Leaders must ensure that all teachers have sufficient subject knowledge for the subjects they teach and lead.
- Leaders have not devised approaches to assessing pupils' knowledge in foundation subjects. Teachers are unclear about what knowledge pupils have. Some pupils are left with gaps in their learning, which makes any future learning difficult for them. Leaders should ensure that there are effective assessment systems in place for foundation subjects.

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.

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	146208
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10241319
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	254
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Laughton
Principal	Kerry Mills
Website	www.newtonroadschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Nene Education Trust in September 2018. When its predecessor school, Risdene Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, art and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects. For these subjects, they checked the work that pupils had produced, looked at subject plans and spoke with pupils and subject leaders.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for: behaviour; personal development; the use of the pupil premium funding; the early years foundation stage; and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and the principal to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- An inspector spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local committee and a trustee.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and the director of school improvement from the trust.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Liz Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Katie Towers	Ofsted Inspector

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