

Inspection of The Isaac Newton Primary School

Dysart Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 7DG

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Isaac Newton Primary School are nurtured and well cared for. They feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Parents appreciate this care. One parent, typical of many, commented: 'My daughter loves coming to school.'

Pupils are encouraged to be confident and well prepared socially for secondary school. For example, they learn about how to stay safe when online. As pupils move through the school, they develop leadership skills by undertaking roles such as 'playground pals' and 'well-being warriors'. At breakfast club, pupils enjoy helping each other learn about healthy eating. Pupils relish taking part in clubs on offer such as choir and computer animation.

Pupils understand and recognise diversity. They know that they must treat each other with respect and tolerance. They demonstrate the school's rules to 'be ready, be respectful and be safe'. Bullying is rare and, when it does occur, pupils say it is dealt with quickly and successfully.

Pupils are keen to learn. They concentrate in lessons. However, some children in the early years do not get off to a good start. Some pupils do not learn quickly enough how to read well.

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

Leaders want pupils to be ready for the next stage in their education. They have built a curriculum around 'subject hierarchies'. This helps them to structure the content of different subjects in a coherent and logical order. In almost all subjects, the important knowledge that pupils need to learn is clearly identified. Pupils remember key facts and vocabulary. For example, in geography pupils understand what is meant by a river's 'source' and 'tributaries'.

Leaders are in the early stages of developing ways to assess pupils' knowledge in some subjects. Teachers do not systematically check what pupils know across all subjects. They do not always identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. This leads to some pupils struggling to build on their prior knowledge.

Leaders have identified the important knowledge that children need to learn in the early years. However, the provision does not routinely support children to develop this knowledge. Children play with each other kindly and enjoy climbing on the outdoor play equipment. However, not all children understand and develop learning routines quickly. Teachers do not prioritise the development of children's early reading skills. Some children are not prepared well enough for Year 1.

Leaders have not ensured that the teaching of reading and phonics helps all pupils to read with confidence and fluency. Some pupils' books do not match the sounds

that they have learned. These pupils struggle to sound out words in their books. Adults do not always address pupils' errors when they write sounds.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers ensure that adaptations are made to the curriculum and the environment to help pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum. For example, pupils were supported to work in a small group to learn the difference between physical and human features in geography.

Pupils who need help to regulate their emotions benefit from the support of trained adults who understand their needs. They make sure that these pupils can access the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders have developed strong systems to support pupils' attendance. Most pupils attend well. A pastoral worker supports families to access help when needed. Leaders want the school to be an 'oasis for the community'.

Pupils have access to the wide range of clubs the school offers. The school has been awarded a national award in recognition of the quantity and quality of sporting activities on offer. The personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils' personal development. Assemblies and wider opportunities, including visitors to the school and visits to the local area, enhance the curriculum. Pupils treat each other as equals and respect each other's differences. Pupils are taught to be resilient learners even when they find this difficult.

Leaders have identified some areas of the school needing improvement. For example, they recognise some of the weaknesses in reading and in the early years provision. However, they have not acted swiftly enough to bring about the necessary changes. Leaders are mindful of staff's well-being and workload. Staff appreciate this and say there is always someone to listen. Staff describe the school as a 'haven'.

Those responsible for governance support school leaders. They do not always challenge leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders are passionate about supporting vulnerable children and families. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Leaders follow up any concerns they may have about pupils' welfare. All staff have received relevant training and know what to do if they have concerns. Those responsible for governance make regular checks on safeguarding arrangements.

Pupils say they feel safe. They know they can talk to any adult about their worries and concerns. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about how to stay safe, including an age-appropriate understanding of relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the school's phonics programme is well implemented for all pupils. Some teachers promote misconceptions. Pupils' errors are not always corrected. This does not help all pupils to learn to read quickly and fluently. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the school's phonics programme well.
- Leaders have not ensured that all staff in the early years have the knowledge and expertise to deliver the early years curriculum. This does not prepare children well for their next stage in learning. Leaders should ensure that all staff in the early years have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver the school's early years curriculum.
- Leaders have not ensured that systems are in place to enable teachers to check pupils' learning in all subjects. In some subjects, teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and plan to address these. Leaders should ensure that assessment is consistently effective across the school.

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	141100
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10242226
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	404
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Hopkins
Headteacher	Chris Heathcote
Website	www.isaacnewton.eschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has had a change of headteacher since the last inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 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 lead inspector met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. A meeting was held with the school's special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer. She also met with the chair of the local school's board.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, geography and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also held meetings with leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance. They observed pupils' behaviour and conduct throughout the school day.
- Inspectors spoke with parents. Responses to the various Ofsted's surveys were considered. Inspectors also spoke with groups of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders to consider the school's safeguarding culture and procedures. The school's single central record was also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Ann Davey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen McMullan	Ofsted Inspector
Ellenor Beighton	Ofsted Inspector

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