

# Inspection of a good school: New Road Primary School

Bryant Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 5QN

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Inspection dates:

18 and 19 April 2023

## Outcome

New Road Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils come to school eager to learn and excited for the day ahead. They enjoy learning the school's interesting and challenging curriculum. Pupils work hard in lessons and are enthusiastic to talk about what they have learned. They particularly enjoy taking part in sporting competitions and musical performances.

Pupils are kind and friendly to one another. They are welcoming to visitors and newcomers to the school. Pupils are accepting of people's differences, cultures and faiths. Those joining the school make friends quickly and settle in well. One pupil described the school as 'a second home'.

Pupils feel safe and well looked after. They say that staff genuinely care about them. Many agreed when one pupil said, 'Staff care about our families too.' Pupils know that if they, or their parents, have a problem, adults in school will help them. Bullying incidents are rare and are resolved quickly, as are any minor friendship issues.

A small number of pupils can find it more difficult to manage their behaviour. This includes some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff provide effective strategies to support these pupils to manage and improve their behaviour. The school's nurture provision also helps pupils to be calm and to focus on their learning.

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

Leaders have built a team of staff who are committed to delivering a high-quality education for all pupils. Staff feel supported by senior leaders to develop their teaching knowledge and skills, and to manage their workload.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that teaches pupils important knowledge and skills. The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of experiences. These broaden pupils' horizons and encourage them to have high aspirations for their future lives.

Leaders plan trips to local places of interest. They take pupils to the seaside, the theatre, museums and galleries. Scientists, athletes and authors visit the school to deliver inspiring workshops for pupils.

Leaders have planned the curriculum so that pupils learn increasingly complex knowledge over time. In most subjects, this is planned in detail and content has been carefully sequenced. When teachers deliver new knowledge, they build carefully on what pupils have already learned. For example, in mathematics, children in the early years get off to a strong start learning the basics of counting and number. This provides a strong foundation for their future learning. As pupils move through the school, teachers build on this knowledge skilfully. Older pupils know a wide range of mathematical facts and concepts. This helps them to tackle complex mathematical problems confidently.

In a small number of subjects, curriculum plans are not detailed enough. In these subjects, teaching is not as sharply focused as it could be. Leaders are in the process of reviewing these subjects to make sure that plans are as detailed and well sequenced as other subjects. They have made a strong start but there is more work to do. Pupils are developing a secure knowledge of important content across the curriculum. However, they sometimes find it harder to make links with their prior learning in those subjects that are less well developed.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain important concepts well. Teachers make effective use of resources and activities to support pupils' learning. They check what pupils have remembered and help them catch up if they fall behind. Pupils with SEND are supported well in lessons. Adults give additional explanations and provide useful resources to aid pupils' understanding. However, sometimes, staff are not specific enough when setting learning targets for pupils with SEND. This makes it harder for leaders to check whether the support in place is helping pupils to learn effectively.

Learning to read is a priority. Teachers follow a carefully sequenced phonics programme. They provide lots of opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their phonic knowledge. However, there are inconsistencies in how well pupils are supported to learn to read. Sometimes, pupils read books that are not matched to the phonic sounds they know. When this happens, pupils do not have the precise practise they need to quickly become confident readers. Children make a strong start in the early years. They build on their phonic knowledge well as they move into Year 1. Over time, pupils develop into confident, fluent readers.

Pupils work hard in lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers and to one another. Staff intervene quickly if pupils misbehave. Staff manage this sensitively and effectively so that it does not become disruptive to other pupils.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a culture where keeping pupils safe is everyone's top priority. They train all adults working in school so that they are knowledgeable about this important aspect of the school's work. Staff are vigilant in reporting their concerns. Leaders respond quickly to any concerns raised by staff. They work hard to ensure that pupils and their families get the help and support they need.

Pupils experience a range of workshops to teach them how to keep themselves safe. They know how to keep themselves safe online and know who to talk to if they are worried.

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

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

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified in sufficient detail the content that pupils will study. This means that teaching does not always build on what pupils already know. Furthermore, pupils can find it difficult to make links with their prior learning. Leaders need to complete their work to review curriculum plans in these subjects so that the crucial content pupils need to learn is made explicitly clear.
- Sometimes, the targets set for pupils with SEND are not specific enough. This makes it hard for leaders to check whether interventions are working, or whether they need to make adaptations. Leaders need to make sure that the targets set for these pupils identify precisely what it is that pupils need to learn and develop.
- There is variability in how well pupils are supported when learning to read. Sometimes, pupils do not practise reading using books that are matched closely to their emerging phonic knowledge. This means that pupils do not learn to read with confidence and fluency quickly enough. Leaders need to iron out the inconsistencies in the teaching of early reading swiftly.

## 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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 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.

## 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>	118320
<b>Local authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241699
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	363
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Liam Bonthrone
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Forrest
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.newroad.medway.sch.uk">www.newroad.medway.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school admits three-year-old children into the nursery provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils. She also met with representatives from the governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to some pupils read. She also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- To inspect the school's safeguarding arrangements, the inspector met with leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at relevant documentation, staff recruitment checks and training records. The inspector also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- The inspector spoke with pupils from different year groups about their experiences at school.
- The views of staff, pupils and parents were gathered through discussions and through Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Leah Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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