

Inspection of New Milton Infant School

Lymington Road, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 6PZ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring and inclusive school. Leaders have a strong sense of moral purpose and work hard to ensure that all pupils are supported effectively. Staff get to know pupils quickly and their families well. As a result, relationships between adults and pupils are genuinely warm and nurturing. Pupils are kind towards each other, and if there are any misunderstandings, they resolve them with the help of staff. Incidents of bullying are uncommon, and leaders take swift and effective action if it does happen.

Pupils understand the school's rules: 'to be kind, to be honest, to be safe and try your best'. As a result, they are well behaved and the environment is calm and purposeful. Pupils are keen to learn and get off to a good start with their education.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They talk enthusiastically about the many enrichment opportunities on offer. Pupils are excited to use the 'library bus', and enjoy the clubs they attend, such as football, tennis, Spanish and yoga. They are rightly proud to take on important positions of responsibility on the 'eco-team' or the school council, or to be a 'playground buddy'.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, which starts in the early years. They have identified the important knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to learn over time. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They explain ideas clearly and help pupils to make links with learning that has taken place before. Staff make regular checks to see how well pupils are achieving. As a result, teachers know how to adapt learning and to support any pupils who may fall behind. Leaders make sure that each pupil's needs are understood. Staff are well equipped with strategies to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Mostly, pupils learn well. Children in the early years benefit from a range of carefully planned activities which help them to deepen their learning. However, at times, activities for older pupils in the mixed classes are not as well thought out. Staff do not always support these pupils' learning as well as they might. Leaders have been keeping these new arrangements under review and know what needs to be improved.

Leaders have worked hard to implement a rigorous approach to reading, which starts from day one in the early years. The new phonics scheme has had a positive impact. Teaching is methodical and staff quickly spot any gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge. They put support in place for pupils who need help to catch up. Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to a wide range of books which match their reading ability. Pupils are encouraged to read at home regularly. As a result, they develop the skills they need to become confident and fluent readers.

Leaders have thought carefully about the personal development of pupils. From the early years, pupils learn healthy routines and are supported by staff to become independent. They are taught how to keep safe online. Leaders have pledged that pupils will have a range of experiences while they are at New Milton. Pupils enjoy a variety of educational visits that enrich their experience of the curriculum, such as their trip to a local farm and to the zoo. Visitors to the school, such as the police and lifeguards, contribute to pupils' understanding of the people who can help them.

Pupils develop an understanding of different beliefs and religions, and are keen to impress that everyone is welcome at their school. They learn what it means to be a good citizen through activities such as visiting a local care home to sing to the residents. Leadership positions allow pupils to contribute to school life and help them learn to take responsibility for the environment. This broad and inclusive offer means that all pupils enjoy learning beyond the curriculum and develop an understanding of life in the wider world.

Governors are highly knowledgeable and offer effective challenge to school leaders. The headteacher is outward looking and seeks advice on further developments. Staff are well supported. Leaders are conscientious about their ongoing development and welfare. As a result, staff are happy and proud to work at this school. Leaders proactively engage with parents and carers. They keep them updated about their child's learning and communicate their expectations for good attendance. However, despite their best efforts, a minority of pupils do not come to school regularly enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe and are confident that they know where to go for help. Leaders ensure that all staff have the relevant training to help them identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff know their pupils well and are swift to report any concerns. This includes staff in the resource-based provision who use their specialist training to help children communicate. Leaders respond to safeguarding issues promptly. Detailed records are kept of any concerns. Where necessary, leaders work proactively with other agencies and are tenacious in their efforts to secure the help that pupils need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not always implemented as well as intended. This means that, at times, some pupils' learning is not maximised. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills they need to support pupils' learning effectively.

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means that they are not fully benefiting from all that the school has to offer. Leaders should redouble their efforts to support the most vulnerable pupils and their families to improve their attendance.

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	115928
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10267877
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carol Coomber
Headteacher	Amy Wake
Website	www.nmis.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2010

Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, the school was using one alternative provision.
- There is a resource-based unit for pre-school children who require intensive speech and language support co-located on the school site.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. An inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and geography. They discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors considered 32 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey, as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding leaders, spoke with pupils and staff, checked the school's records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school, and spoke with governors.
- Inspectors visited the specialist resource provision and met with the school special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.

Inspection team

James Stuart, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Linda Jacobs

Ofsted Inspector

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