

# Inspection of a good school: New Mills Primary School

Meadow Street, New Mills, High Peak, Derbyshire SK22 4AY

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Inspection dates:

13 and 14 June 2023

## Outcome

New Mills Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, staff, parents and carers are proud to be members of this happy, caring school. One pupil told the inspector: 'Everyone is kind here, and the staff are really encouraging.' Pupils say that they feel safe. They like that staff quickly sort out any problems.

The school's leaders prioritise pupils' personal and academic development. Pupils like to work hard and have positive attitudes to their work. Staff have high expectations of all pupils. They create a calm and positive environment in school. When appropriate, skilled staff support pupils to manage their emotions.

Pupils are polite, respectful and behave well. They care for one another. Pupils have a clear understanding of difference and equality. One pupil said: 'This is a school where everyone is treated with respect.'

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent, with a comment that was typical of many, said: 'All staff care for the children and are positive when speaking about them. The school has lots of trips throughout the year, which helps to nurture and enhance their experiences. The regular newsletters update me on what my child is learning.' Parents appreciate the broad range of sports and outdoor opportunities on offer.

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

Leaders and staff have designed a curriculum that matches the ambition of the national curriculum. Most of the curriculum is set out clearly, and teachers know what to teach and when. Leaders are refining some curriculum areas, including in the early years, to ensure that the important knowledge pupils need to acquire is clearly identified. Most pupils remember what they have learned. For example, pupils recall learning about forehand and backhand when they were taught about different tennis strokes in physical education (PE). They can confidently explain how to position themselves on the tennis court so they can move efficiently.

Curriculum developments are relatively recent. This means that some pupils forget their learning because they are not building on firm foundations. Leaders have rightly identified that staff need more time to embed the curriculum changes. Leaders have also rightly identified that curriculum leaders must drive further improvements.

Staff have strong subject knowledge. They check pupils' learning during lessons, using skilled questioning. Their interactions with pupils are of high quality. They present learning so that most pupils remember what they have been taught. For example, in mathematics, children in the early years compare different objects, using the vocabulary of 'heavier' and 'lighter'. Older pupils apply accurate knowledge of place value when converting decimals to fractions.

Staff regularly assess what pupils know in the core subjects. However, leaders' checks on other curriculum areas do not always focus on progression of knowledge and skills from the early years to Year 6. Leaders are currently developing ways of checking what pupils have learned for these subjects.

Reading is prioritised from the early years. Leaders have adopted a clear and systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. Staff regularly check how successfully pupils learn new sounds. Teachers make sure that the books pupils read match the sounds they have learned. They are quick to provide support if pupils fall behind. As a result, pupils are learning to read fluently.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive high-quality support. Teachers identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. They skilfully adapt their teaching so that these pupils can access the curriculum. Leaders work well with external agencies to provide additional support when needed. Leaders communicate well with parents.

Pupils are a credit to the school. Pupils play happily together. They behave well and focus during lessons. They understand the school routines. Staff quickly establish the routines in the early years. Children are taught to follow instructions.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's work. Leaders ensure that the curriculum extends well beyond the academic. Pupils eagerly take on leadership responsibilities. A high proportion of pupils regularly attend the wide range of sports and outdoor opportunities on offer. This is a strength of the school. Pupils and parents alike speak very highly of this feature of school life. Teachers make sure that pupils learn about different types of families and how people from different backgrounds live. There is some inconsistency in some pupils' knowledge of the fundamental British values and world faiths.

Leaders have a clear understanding of what is working well and what needs to be improved. Staff feel valued by leaders. They appreciate that their workload and well-being are prioritised. Governors understand their role and carry it out effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong safeguarding culture in school. Every member of staff is aware of their responsibility for safeguarding pupils. Staff receive ongoing training so that they are aware of potential risks to pupils. Safeguarding concerns are recorded and reported promptly to leaders. Leaders have developed strong relationships with external agencies to make sure that pupils are kept safe and families receive the help they need. Appropriate pre-employment checks are made on staff. Pupils receive plentiful information about how to keep safe, including when working online. Governors monitor the school's safeguarding work.

## **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 the specific knowledge they want pupils to learn. As a result, sometimes, teachers are not clear what has been taught before and what they need to teach and when. Leaders should continue to develop subject leaders' expertise so that they can make sure that end points are broken down and teachers are clear about the knowledge pupils need to learn from the early years to the end of key stage 2.
- In some subjects, leaders have only recently reviewed the curriculum. As a result, they are still developing strategies for teachers to check what pupils know. They should ensure that staff have sufficient information to identify gaps in learning so that they can help pupils to know and remember more.

## **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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2013.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 112597   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Derbyshire   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10267975   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Maintained   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 212  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | David Cupit  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Carol Taylor   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk">www.newmills-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 28 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                                |

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

## 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 have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEND, and teaching and support staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and PE. 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 also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.

- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns. Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. The inspector also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

## **Inspection team**

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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