

# Inspection of Netherton CofE Primary School

Highbridge Road, Netherton, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 0HU

---

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
------------------------------	-------------

---

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	<b>Good</b>
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
---------------------------	-------------

Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
-----------------------	-------------

Previous inspection grade	Good
---------------------------	------

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Netherton CofE Primary staff and pupils share the same high ambitions. New leadership, culture and expectations are bringing these ambitions to life rapidly. Pupils understand and follow the leaders' aims to 'make a difference to everyone'. Pupils speak positively about the support they receive. They believe that 'I care, I'm accepted, I'm loved and I can do it'. Typical parent comments are that their children 'thrive' in school.

New leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils study a range of subjects. Current learning is improving swiftly. However, despite this ambitious curriculum, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should, especially with their writing.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are respectful and positive. During playtimes, a minority of pupils can forget to behave sensibly. Staff understand the precise needs of these pupils. They act quickly and efficiently to address any behaviour issues.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils on the school council and sports leaders are proud to support others. These roles help pupils understand how to be responsible. Many pupils take part in an increasingly large number of enrichment opportunities, such as dance, mindfulness, fitness and art.

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

There has been significant change within the senior leadership of the school since the last inspection. Leaders have worked rapidly to review and design a highly ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). New policies have brought a rapid improvement in how pupils learn and behave. Leaders have successfully raised staff's, pupils' and parents' expectations.

In all classes, including the early years, positive relationships between teachers, pupils and parents help pupils to be confident and happy. Children in the early years have a strong start to their school life. Leaders encourage them to learn more and to develop a curiosity about the world. Children and teachers make the most of the special, happy environment they have created.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Most teachers carefully check what pupils know and remember. Some pupils remember their previous knowledge well. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 could remember their learning about angles and shapes in mathematics. They could explain the differences between right, acute, obtuse and reflex angles well. However, in some subjects, pupils do not remember the key knowledge sufficiently well. Leaders know that there is more work needed to ensure pupils remember more in all subjects.

Leaders quickly identify any pupil who may need additional support, including pupils with SEND. All pupils follow the same curriculum. A few pupils with specific SEND needs have effective teaching in 'The Hive'. Most teachers use information about pupils' additional needs to adapt their teaching well. This means that pupils with SEND can successfully access learning in line with other pupils. However, some teachers do not adapt work for pupils with SEND well enough. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they might.

Senior leaders have introduced a new reading programme that focuses on pupils' literacy. Leaders quickly identify any pupil with weak literacy skills when they join the school. The precise sequencing of phonics teaching helps pupils to learn the right sounds at the right time. Those pupils who need help to catch up receive support quickly. Pupils are now making strong progress in learning to read. However, not all pupils are developing their writing skills sufficiently well. Some teachers do not insist that pupils form their letters correctly, and the development of writing techniques is not consistent. Leaders are continuing to develop effective learning activities around writing.

Absence from school is preventing a significant number of pupils from achieving their potential. There are too many pupils who miss school unnecessarily. This means that they miss out on too much learning. Leaders are aware of the need to engage with pupils and parents further.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development is highly effective. Pupils understand about healthy relationships and to respect other people's opinions. They voice their opinions about the school. This encourages pupils to have a strong sense of belonging. Anti-bullying ambassadors, well-being ambassadors and librarians are role models for younger pupils. Pupils appreciate the increased number of trips and visits, including to local zoos and parks.

Governors and trustees know their school well. They support and challenge leaders in meetings and in visits to the school. Those responsible for governance review and question the curriculum. They hold leaders to account effectively for safeguarding and the quality of the SEND provision. Leaders carefully consider staff workload, which staff are appreciative of.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is embedded into the culture of the school. Leaders are visible in person and their photographs are on display around the school. Leaders know the pupils and their local context extremely well. They use this knowledge to plan support and help for pupils and their families. Leaders contact external agencies quickly when families require early help. Where staff have concerns, there are swift processes to record and inform leaders. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of all staff to work with pupils.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including online and when talking to unfamiliar people.

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

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

- Some pupils miss too much school. This holds back their progress and achievement. Leaders must work closely with parents and external agencies to secure more regular attendance for all pupils.
- Not all teachers adapt their lessons precisely enough for pupils with SEND. This means that some pupils with SEND do not understand what they are asked to do clearly enough and cannot achieve their potential. Leaders should ensure that all teachers consistently adapt their learning to fully support all pupils with SEND in every year group.
- Not all pupils are able to write fluently and accurately. Letter formation, including in the early years, is not taught consistently by all teachers. As a result, some pupils do not have the writing accuracy they need to achieve in line with their peers. Leaders should ensure that writing is planned and taught consistently from the early years to the end of key stage 2 so that all pupils can successfully develop their writing techniques.

## **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>	144418
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256837
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	416
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Hugh Richards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Harvey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.netherton.dudley.sch.uk">www.netherton.dudley.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 and 30 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Worcester Multi-Academy Trust, which contains 16 schools.
- The new headteacher joined the school in September 2022.
- A new deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2022.
- A new assistant headteacher joined the school in April 2023.
- Leaders make use of one alternative provision for one pupil.
- Netherton C of E Primary School is part of the Diocese of Worcester. The school received its last section 48 inspection of church schools on 19 March 2019. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors focused on the following deep dives: early reading, mathematics, geography and history. Inspectors looked at leaders' curriculum planning, visited lessons, heard pupils read to a familiar adult, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the school's curriculum and improvement planning. The school's website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further safeguarding records. They also looked at how incidents that are reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with a representative of the local authority, local diocese, trustees, governors, the school improvement adviser, headteacher, teachers, learning support assistants and pupils. Inspectors also talked informally to pupils, staff and parents to gather information about school life.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Stuart Clarkson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ann Pritchard

Senior His Majesty's Inspector

Anne Potter

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023