

Inspection of a good school: Newhall Infant School

Sunnyside, Newhall, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 0TJ

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Outcome

Newhall Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend Newhall Infant School, which is known locally as Newhall Infant and Nursery School. Parents say that 'everything is fantastic' at this 'community-orientated' school. Pupils and teachers observe the school rule to 'show kindness in all we do'. Children in the early years develop positive attitudes to learning. All pupils engage eagerly in lessons. They play happily together at playtimes. Pupils say that they feel safe in the school. They trust the staff to keep them safe.

Staff have high expectations for behaviour and for what pupils can achieve. Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare. Pupils enjoy the praise and rewards their teachers give them when they work hard and behave well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive all the support they need to access the same learning as the other pupils.

In assemblies, and across the curriculum, pupils learn about fundamental British values and diversity. They learn about different faiths and cultures. Pupils are considerate and respectful to each other and their teachers. One pupil explained, 'We treat everybody the same.'

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

The new leadership team has worked quickly to bring stability to the school. This includes changes to staffing and a reorganisation of the early years classes. The headteacher has a strong vision and a focus on improving the school even further. Staff are positive about the changes. They appreciate the support they get from leaders to help manage their workload. There have been changes to the governing body, including the appointment of a new chair. Governors know the school well and share the headteacher's desire to continue to develop the curriculum. They are committed to providing the support and challenge that leaders need to make sure their vision becomes a reality.

Reading is a priority in the school. Teachers help pupils develop a love of books as soon as they join the school. Leaders have adopted a new phonics programme. Teachers and other adults have received training to ensure that they deliver the programme well. Pupils enjoy the routines in their phonics lessons. They enthusiastically practise reading from books that have been carefully chosen to match the sounds they learn. Pupils who struggle to learn to read get extra support and practise every day. Leaders have plans to develop the school library further so that pupils can choose from an even greater range of high-quality texts.

Leaders have designed the mathematics curriculum to make sure that all pupils learn the knowledge they need to be ready for the next stage of their education. Teachers plan interesting activities for pupils in lessons. However, sometimes they do not focus well enough on the knowledge they want pupils to learn. They do not always give pupils opportunities to recall what they have learned before. This is the case in some other subjects, too. As a result, pupils do not always remember what they have learned. Leaders have plans to improve teaching in mathematics so that all pupils achieve well.

In art lessons, teachers refer to interesting artists and themes to inspire pupils. Pupils learn the knowledge they need to develop skills in drawing, painting, printing, weaving and sculpture. They enjoy practising these skills. Teachers ask questions to check that pupils remember what they have learned. Pupils use the knowledge they have gained to produce work that they are proud of.

In English lessons, pupils learn the knowledge they need to become confident writers. They practise writing often. Teachers regularly check pupils' writing. They give pupils feedback that helps them to improve. In other subjects, leaders have developed a new, ambitious curriculum for September 2023. The plans identify the knowledge that pupils will learn as they progress from the early years to Year 2. Curriculum leaders provide valuable support to teachers to make sure that they deliver the curriculum effectively.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school as well as they should, although this has improved. Leaders have plans to ensure that attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils, improves further.

There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn beyond the academic curriculum. In the early years, children learn important communication and social skills. All pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They enjoy learning about the world through outdoor activities and trips to interesting local places.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make all appropriate checks on members of staff and visitors. All staff know how to identify when pupils may be at risk. The new leadership team has provided training to staff to make sure they know how to report and record any concerns they have. Leaders act quickly when concerns are raised. They meet regularly to discuss vulnerable pupils and work effectively with families and other agencies.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and how to avoid risky situations. They learn about online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In mathematics lessons, teachers do not always focus sharply enough on the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. When this happens, pupils do not gain a deep enough understanding of what they need to learn to be able to solve problems or explain their reasoning clearly, for example. Leaders need to ensure that teaching improves so that all pupils learn and remember the important knowledge they need to achieve well in mathematics.
- In some subjects, teachers do not systematically give pupils opportunities to recall knowledge that they have learned previously. Pupils cannot always remember what they have learned. They do not always make links between important topics. Teachers need to revisit important knowledge routinely so that pupils remember what they have learned and deepen their understanding over time.

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

Unique reference number	112636
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10298378
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Stubbs
Headteacher	Shelley White
Website	www.newhallinfants.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2023.
- The school uses no alternative providers.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and other school leaders.
- The inspector met with two members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of Derbyshire local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. 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 observed some pupils reading to their teacher.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and samples of pupils' work for some other subjects.
- The inspector evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks, reviewing other records and holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector looked at behaviour and attendance records and discussed these with leaders.
- The inspector considered the responses to the pupil, parent and staff surveys.
- The inspector spoke with pupils, parents and staff to hear their experiences of the school.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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