

Inspection of Newton St Cyres Primary School

Station Road, Newton St Cyres, Exeter, Devon EX5 5DL

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils meet the school's high expectations for behaviour. The school is a calm place to learn. Pupils are happy. They feel safe and secure. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance rates are high.

Children make an outstanding start in the early years. Their starting points are precisely understood and then carefully built on. Staff support all children well to succeed and develop a love of learning.

The school helps pupils to become responsible, active citizens. The school and eco-council are democratically organised and proactive. Pupils on the school council organise and run their own healthy tuck shop. This raises money for improvements to the school, such as the new outdoor classroom, the 'hobby hut'.

Pupils have exceptional experiences at this school. Trips and visits bring the curriculum to life. Visitors from the community and beyond inspire pupils. Many pupils experience a range of activities that broaden their experience and increase their self-confidence. Every pupil can learn how to play a musical instrument, sing in the choir, play tag rugby or practise circus skills.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents say the staff 'go above and beyond' to care for their children. All parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View survey would recommend the school.

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

The school has high ambitions for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has designed an effective curriculum from early years to Year 6. In most subjects, the school has identified the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn and the order in which it should be taught from the early years to Year 6. This means that pupils build on their knowledge over time. For example, in mathematics, older pupils use their knowledge of multiplication to solve area problems. However, in a few subjects, the knowledge the school wants pupils to learn is not always broken down into small steps and the learning intentions are sometimes too broad. This means that pupils do not learn as well.

Reading is a key focus for the school. Children in the early years quickly develop a love of reading. There is a highly effective reading programme in place. Books are carefully matched to the sounds pupils know, providing daily opportunities for them to practise and develop their fluency and accuracy. Staff skilfully check that pupils know the sounds they have been taught. Extra support is provided to help pupils who are struggling. Older pupils enjoy the books teachers read to them. The school has carefully selected a wide range of high-quality books that reflect diversity and difference.

The school ensures that relationships with parents of pupils with SEND are strong. These pupils receive effective support. Staff regularly check that pupils are remembering the intended learning. Teachers address misconceptions swiftly and use these as learning points. As a result, in most areas of the curriculum pupils, including those with SEND, learn well.

Children in the early years are well cared for. Learning in the Nursery feeds seamlessly into Reception. Staff create a buzz of excitement about learning. There is a strong focus on communication and language through reading stories and singing songs. Adults expertly interact with children and model new vocabulary. The early years curriculum ensures that children develop the knowledge and skills they need to move successfully into Year 1 and beyond.

The school has extremely high ambitions for pupils' personal development. The school has ensured that pupils have rich and well-planned experiences beyond the classroom and understand the importance of having strong morals and character. Staff have excellent relationships with pupils. There is a strong sense of mutual respect throughout the school.

The school's personal, social and health education curriculum reinforces this work. The school uses resources and questions that prompt pupils to think and discuss their ideas in depth. Pupils debate and discuss local, national and international issues with sensitivity and maturity. The school skilfully promotes tolerance, respect, diversity and knowledge of protected characteristics. As a result, pupils have a very strong understanding of people's differences, other faiths and fundamental British values.

Governors know the school well. With leaders, they ensure that staff workload and well-being are fully considered. A thorough programme of professional development, including school and federation-based training, helps to keep staff up to date. As a result, staff are highly motivated. They are proud to work at the school and they appreciate the high level of support from leaders and the federation.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to report safeguarding concerns in a timely manner. However, systems for recording concerns are not always completed in sufficient detail. Records are not routinely monitored with rigour. As a result, the school is not clear on patterns or trends. This makes it hard to further strengthen systems and procedures.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not identified the precise content that pupils, including those with SEND, are expected to know and remember. The school should ensure that, in all subjects, teachers are clear about the specific content pupils need to know and remember.
- There are some minor issues with some safeguarding records. A small number of records are not clear enough about the actions that leaders have taken to keep children safe. This makes it harder for the school to check that the right course of action has been followed or identify patterns or trends with safeguarding issues. The school must ensure that all safeguarding records contain details that enable staff to have a clear overview of actions taken.

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' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	113104
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10307225
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jackie Enright
Headteacher	John Jolliffe (executive headteacher), James Durward-Akhurst (deputy executive headteacher and head of school)
Website	www.exevalleyfederation.co.uk/Newton-St-Cyres
Date of previous inspection	17 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Exe Valley Federation, which has six other schools.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two- and three-year-olds.
- Newton St Cyres Primary school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leads, members of staff, a representative from the local authority, and the chair and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited samples of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Gavin Summerfield, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jane Dhillon

Ofsted Inspector

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