

Inspection of Newbridge School

Midland Road, Worcester, Worcestershire WR5 1DS

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2023

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The executive headteacher of this school is Ian Enwright. This school is part of Central Learning Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Doug Selkirk, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Robert Turton.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who join Newbridge School have experienced a disrupted education. Many have been out of school for a while. At Newbridge, pupils say that they have found a school where they feel safe. They know staff want the very best for them and they feel valued.

The school is calm and orderly. Staff know their pupils well. If pupils are finding the school day hard, there is always someone for them to talk to. The expert intervention support team makes sure that pupils get the help they need when they need it. As a result, pupils are able to learn well.

Pupils value the broader curriculum that the school has introduced. They know that they are being prepared to return to mainstream school or college or to an appropriate next placement. Pupils are recognised for their learning and behaviour and try hard to earn 'BLD points', which they can use for weekly rewards. Pupils enjoy taking part in sporting competitions with local schools and going on trips to science parks, careers fairs and a bowling facility. Pupils are being prepared well for their future.

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

The new headteacher has a clear vision for the school. He is determined that all pupils will receive the best quality of education possible. As a result, he has made many very effective changes to the school's provision. Many stakeholders describe these changes as 'transformational'.

Leaders understand that pupils have had different experiences before they join Newbridge. As a result, the school has put in place a rigorous system of assessment so that, before pupils join the school, their previous learning, emotional and behavioural needs and any special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified. The school puts the right support in place from the start to make sure that all pupils can be successful.

The school has introduced a new curriculum. Pupils in key stage 4 now take qualifications in a wider range of subjects than previously. Leaders have recognised that more pupils join the school in key stage 3 and that they tend to stay at the school for longer. As a result, they have redesigned their curriculum offer to reflect this. In many subjects, the curriculum is planned well. It allows pupils to build on their prior learning. In some subjects in key stage 3, however, the curriculum is not designed to enable pupils to build securely on their learning over time. This limits their ability to do well. The school prioritises reading, and pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading follow an appropriate phonics curriculum.

The school has identified that some pupils, particularly those who have been out of education for a long time, need additional support to begin to attend school

regularly. These pupils join a programme that is intended to provide them with the intensive support that they need in order to be ready to learn. This involves a part-time school timetable. However, this timetable is not always well focused on pupils' next steps, and pupils are often following this pathway for a significant length of time. For some pupils, this is not the best way to make sure that they integrate back into school.

The school is tenacious in ensuring that pupils attend school when they should. A raft of strategies is used to support and challenge pupils to attend well. The school addresses barriers to good attendance by providing highly focused support for pupils and their families. Attendance is discussed in the very effective multi-agency meetings that have been set up by the school to make sure that all pupils get the help they need. As a result of these actions, attendance is improving. However, some pupils do not attend school often enough and so do not benefit from the school's curriculum and provision as well as they could.

The school puts personal, social and health education (PSHE) at the centre of what it does. It teaches pupils how to manage the risks they may face in the community and how to keep safe. Pupils also have individually focused sessions to address any risks they may be facing. The school provides an effective careers education, and older pupils are supported well to make post-16 choices.

Safeguarding is an absolute priority for leaders. They have created a positive culture of safeguarding in which they review and challenge their work to make sure that pupils are kept safe. Leaders are knowledgeable, and all staff are well trained to spot the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Staff are vigilant in identifying concerns and reporting these, and leaders are tenacious in following up their concerns with professionals to make sure that all pupils receive the help that they need.

Governors know the school well. They work closely with trust directors to provide effective challenge and support to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All the required pre-recruitment checks are conducted. However, the trust has introduced a new way of maintaining the single central record. This system does not allow leaders to assure themselves that all checks have been properly conducted. Checks that have been carried out are not recorded properly on the single central record, and as a result, information is missing or incorrectly recorded.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum, in particular in some subjects at key stage 3 and for those pupils who are on part-time timetables, does not match leaders' ambitions for pupils. It does not ensure that all pupils are prepared well enough for their next steps. Leaders should review the curriculum that is currently in place in order to make sure that it matches pupils' needs and aspirations and prepares them well for their next steps.
- The single central record does not record the pre-recruitment checks that have been conducted on staff well enough. Some checks are not recorded accurately on the system that is in place. This means that leaders cannot assure themselves easily that all the right checks on staff have been carried out. Leaders should make sure that the system for recording pre-recruitment checks is clear and fit for purpose.
- Some pupils do not attend school often enough. This means that they do not benefit from the curriculum and wider opportunities that the school offers. Leaders should continue their work on improving attendance, so that all pupils can benefit from the curriculum and provision that are put in place to make sure that they are ready for their next steps.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

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| Unique reference number | 148348 |
| Local authority | Worcestershire |
| Inspection number | 10290683 |
| Type of school | Alternative provision |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 34 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Robert Turton |
| Headteacher | Ian Enwright (Executive Headteacher) |
| Website | https://newbridgeschool.org |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher took up post in 2020.
- The school joined Central Learning Partnership Trust in 2020.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Newbridge School converted to become an academy in November 2020. When its predecessor school, Newbridge Short Stay Secondary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.

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 had 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 spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders, other leaders, the chair of the trust board, the chief executive officer and some governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, art and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils 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 reviewed a range of school documentation relating to the work of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders and staff about the wider work of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the staff survey.
- There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Claire Price, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Russell Hinton

Ofsted Inspector

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