

Inspection of Newton Primary School

Kingsway West, Newton, Chester, Cheshire CH2 2LA

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe in this nurturing school. They care for one another and are taught to have empathy for others in the world beyond the school gates. For example, pupils are keen to support local and international charities. They are quick to respond to global disasters, for instance by raising money for an earthquake appeal.

Pupils enjoy carrying out the many leadership roles on offer. Pupils play an important part in decision-making at the school and support each other's wider personal development. For example, pupils who act as e-safety officers lead whole-school assemblies on issues such as online safety. Pupils are proud to be elected to these roles by their peers. These opportunities promote pupils' understanding of the importance of democracy in society.

Pupils know and follow the school rules well. Their positive conduct around the school helps to create a calm and orderly environment. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), try hard in lessons.

The school has high expectations for pupils' learning. Children in the early years are well prepared for Year 1. However, pupils' achievement across key stages 1 and 2 is uneven. This is because, in some subjects, the school has not identified all the information that pupils must learn. Consequently, pupils, including those with SEND, do not learn all that they should.

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

In the early years, the school has taken care to implement a well-designed curriculum that meets children's learning needs. For example, staff carefully monitor and support the development of children's language and vocabulary. Staff also ensure that children have plentiful opportunities to develop their knowledge of the world around them. Overall, children in the early years achieve well.

Across key stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is less well designed. In several subjects, the school has not established exactly what knowledge pupils must know and understand. In addition, in some subjects, the school has not established the order in which pupils must learn new information. This means that some pupils, including those with SEND, do not develop secure foundations on which to build new learning.

Typically, staff have secure subject knowledge. They mostly check on pupils' learning to identify gaps or misconceptions. However, in some subjects, staff do not have the expertise that they need to deliver elements of the subject curriculums as well as they should. Consequently, staff sometimes do not support pupils to make secure enough connections between topics and concepts. This hinders how well some pupils build their knowledge, skills and understanding in these curriculum areas.

Some of the school's systems for checking on the quality of the curriculum are also underdeveloped. This means that the school, including governors, does not have a sufficiently secure understanding of how well staff are delivering the curriculum in key stages 1 and 2.

The school has successfully prioritised reading. Children in the early years learn about letters and the sounds that they represent as soon as they start school. Teachers receive regular training so that they have the expertise that they need to deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they know. This enables them to consolidate their reading knowledge and to develop their fluency in reading. Staff check that pupils are on track with learning to read. If any pupil falls behind in the phonics programme, they receive effective support to help them to catch up quickly.

The school engages successfully with parents and carers to ensure that they have the help and information that they need to support their children's education at home. For example, the school invites parents to a number of meetings and open afternoons so that they can learn more about phonics and reading.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND appropriately. However, at times, staff do not adapt the delivery of the curriculum as effectively as they should for these pupils. Nevertheless, leaders work well with other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND get the help and support that they need.

Children in the early years settle into school quickly. They form secure relationships with adults and with their friends. Older pupils build on this positive start. They focus in lessons. As a result, pupils learn without disruption.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of one another. They have a thorough understanding of diversity and embrace different cultures and faiths. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. For example, the school promotes pupils' taking part in a range of sporting clubs, such as football, cross-country or netball.

Overall, governors understand and fulfil their statutory duties, including in relation to safeguarding pupils. They successfully support the well-being of the headteacher and staff at the school. However, governors do not have a sufficiently accurate view of how well pupils learn in subjects across the full curriculum.

The school, including governors, carefully takes account of staff's workload when making decisions about improving the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in key stages 1 and 2, the school has not thought carefully enough about the essential knowledge and skills that pupils must learn. This prevents pupils from achieving consistently well. The school should develop an appropriately well-designed curriculum that clearly informs staff about the knowledge that pupils must learn and the order in which this should be taught.
- Some staff do not know enough about how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. This hinders how well pupils with SEND learn and achieve in some subjects. The school should ensure that staff are well trained to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND.
- Some staff do not have sufficiently secure subject knowledge to deliver aspects of the curriculum consistently well. This prevents some pupils from having secure enough foundations on which to build new knowledge and information. The school should ensure that staff receive the training that they require to deliver the curriculum as effectively as they should.
- The school's systems for checking how well the curriculum is being implemented are underdeveloped. As a result, the school, including governors, does not have a sufficiently secure understanding of how successfully pupils are learning new knowledge and information. The school, including governors, should ensure that it establishes systems that provide an insight into the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning.

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

Unique reference number	110976
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10268984
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Williams
Headteacher	Mark Griffiths
Website	www.newtonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a before-school club for pupils.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics, physical education, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of

lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects. They spoke with leaders and pupils. Inspectors also reviewed samples of work in these curriculum areas.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read with a trusted adult.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority. She also met with the chair and vice-chair of governors.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including that relating to behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also examined the school's self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and for staff.

Inspection team

Sue Dymond, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector
Iain Sim	Ofsted Inspector

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