

Inspection of New Mill Infant School

Kirkroyds Lane, New Mill, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire HD9 1LS

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February, and 21 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Evelyne Barrow. This school is part of Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Elaine Watson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gillian Hamer.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's vision, 'Building a Brighter Future Together', underpins the high aspirations and expectations for all pupils. Pupils and staff are proud to be part of the New Mill team. Pupils thrive at this happy and inclusive school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They clearly understand the school rules of being respectful, kind, ready to learn and responsible for their actions. Everyone applies these rules to all aspects of school life. Pupils have a deep understanding of the importance of being respectful and kind to others.

The wide and exciting curriculum provides a rich wealth of opportunities for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils show enthusiasm for learning. In lessons, pupils work hard. They are focused and achieve exceptionally well. Attendance is high because pupils enjoy coming to school.

Relationships between staff and pupils are harmonious and caring. Staff know pupils well. They take swift action if pupils need help. Pupils enjoy time to relax and play with their peers. They are quick to notice if someone is sad or needs encouragement to join in activities. Pupils are kind and caring here. They say they feel safe.

Pupils take part in an impressive range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, such as athletics, dance and mathematics club. Pupils are given many opportunities to learn important life skills, such as cycling, baking and sewing. Pupils particularly enjoy bushcraft lessons and talk with enthusiasm about going on a visit on a train. Other enrichment activities include theatre visits or trips to a local wildlife park. Older pupils are proud to be members of the school council and reading buddies for younger pupils.

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

The school has designed an ambitious and broad curriculum. This curriculum starts in the early years and provides children with a strong foundation for learning in all subjects. This is then built on in Year 1 and beyond. Teachers use the curriculum with great effect to plan sequences of learning in all subjects. They help pupils to build knowledge in all subjects over time. This is seen in religious education lessons, where children in Reception explore resources from different faiths. Older pupils then identify how people from different faiths participate in prayer. In Year 2, pupils use this knowledge to think about what prayer and reflection means for them, in their school.

The provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. Staff ensure pupils with SEND can access all learning through careful adaptation of tasks or by providing extra support when it is needed. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve extremely well. Pupils with complex learning needs are given bespoke support both in the classroom or when working in 'the den' on individual learning targets.

To ensure teachers are well supported to plan learning in all curriculum subjects, the school prioritises staff training. Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong. They use assessment effectively to check for any gaps in pupils' knowledge and to spot any misconceptions. This information is then used to plan pupils' individual next steps in learning.

Children flourish in the early years. They respond positively to the clear routines and extremely high expectations of their teachers. Staff expertly support children to develop their language and communication skills through a variety of exciting and stimulating activities. For example, children explore what happens to ice when they add different substances to it. Staff use precise questioning to find out what children observe while carrying out the activity. Children quickly develop independence and resilience through the wide variety of activities on offer. This means that the early years prepare children extremely well for future learning.

The school has made reading a priority. Staff are highly skilled. They plan and implement phonics lessons that ensure all pupils develop early reading and phonics skills quickly. These phonics lessons begin immediately pupils start in Reception. Teachers swiftly identify when pupils are finding reading more difficult. They provide daily support to help these pupils keep up with their peers. The books pupils read match the sounds they know. Parents receive detailed information about ways in which they can help their child practise their reading at home. The school library is in the centre of the school. It is used with great effect to promote a love of reading through regular visits and weekly reading activities. A wide range of books by different authors stimulate interest among pupils. Pupils say they love to read.

Staff take the time to get to know pupils individually. They use the school values to highlight how pupils should behave towards others. Pupils are keen to learn. They behave consistently well, with high levels of self-control. There is a calm and orderly feel in lessons and around the school. Pupils have high levels of respect for others.

The school's work to support pupils' personal development is exceptional. The carefully planned personal, social and health education curriculum teaches pupils many important life lessons, such as how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Pupils' understanding of tolerance and respect for others is impressive. They talk about challenging stereotypes or treating people equally, with a maturity beyond their years. Pupils have a strong understanding of how to stay safe when online.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many talk about how 'wonderful' and 'supportive' the school is. Staff work effectively as a team. They are proud to work at the school. Leaders value the staff and support them to manage their workload. Well-being is a priority. Trustees and governors carry out their roles efficiently and effectively. They provide support and challenge, when needed, to ensure that leaders are held to account. As a result of this support, the school provides an exceptional standard of education for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	147517
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10297488
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gillian Hamer
CEO of the trust	Elaine Watson
Headteacher	Evelyne Barrow
Website	www.newmillschools.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up post in January 2020.
- The school is part of the Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust.
- The school runs a before-school and after-school club.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

One of His Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school on 21 February 2024 to gather additional evidence.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer for the trust, members of the trust board and representatives of the governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and religious education. In each subject, inspectors met with the subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to adults they know. A further deep dive was carried out into religious education by one of His Majesty's Inspectors on a further visit to the school.
- The lead inspector looked at the curriculum plans for history and geography, and looked at work in pupils' books.
- The inspection team took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plan, self-evaluation and policies, and minutes from governors' and trustees' meetings.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text comments that were submitted. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff questionnaire, as well as pupils' views that were gathered throughout the inspection and through the pupil questionnaire.
- To evaluate 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.

Inspection team

Louise Greatrex, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Katie North	Ofsted Inspector
Andrea Batley	His Majesty's Inspector

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