

Inspection of a good school: Newtown Soberton Infant School

Church Road, Newtown, Fareham, Hampshire PO17 6LJ

Inspection dates:

1 February 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe. They describe their school as welcoming and take pride in knowing the school's rules of 'be ready, respectful and safe'. Learning is rarely interrupted. Pupils play happily on the playground. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. Pupils trust staff to look after them and know that any issues, such as bullying, will be sorted out. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) feel included in school life. Parents appreciate these nurturing aspects of this community school.

Pupils enjoy trips and special events. Recent examples include a visit to the local church to take part in Christingle and a trip to Marwell Zoo. These experiences enrich the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests are more limited.

The school is aspirational for all pupils. Nevertheless, the quality of education that pupils receive is not currently good enough. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school recognises this and has rightly made significant changes to the curriculum. However, it is early days. These actions are beginning to make a difference, but it is too soon to see the impact of these changes on how well pupils learn over time across all subjects.

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

Following a period of turbulence in staffing and leadership, the school is now in a stable position. Staff are working together to quickly address the issues that contributed to disappointing examination outcomes in 2023. The school is benefiting from links with another local infant school and there is a clear vision for improvement. There is now a coherently planned and ambitious curriculum in place for most subjects. The knowledge

and skills that pupils need to learn are sequenced in a logical order. This is supporting teachers to know what to teach and when. Provision for pupils with SEND is prioritised. Staff identify pupils' needs with accuracy. Teachers use this information to adapt learning successfully. This ensures that pupils receive the support they need.

The quality of teaching is variable. Where the curriculum is new, activities in lessons do not always link well enough to the precise knowledge the school intends pupils to learn. In some subjects, teachers are not routinely checking how well pupils have learned the intended knowledge. This means some pupils have gaps in their understanding and are not achieving as well as they should. Conversely, in more established subjects such as mathematics, teachers present new information clearly. They use modelling well to help pupils understand new concepts and provide pupils with regular opportunities to revisit prior knowledge. This helps pupils to know more and do more over time.

The school is improving the teaching of reading. Staff receive the training they need to deliver the new phonics programme well. Pupils read books that are matched to the sounds that they know. Staff provide the help pupils need to use their phonics knowledge to decode with increasing fluency. Parents appreciate the workshops the school provides to help them to support pupils at home. Pupils read every day and enjoy books that reflect a range of authors and genres. As a result, pupils develop into confident readers.

In the early years, staff know the children's needs and interests and use this information to provide activities that help engage children in their learning. Communication and language are a high priority. Staff model this well. This helps children improve their language skills. Work to ensure that the curriculum identifies the precise knowledge that children need to learn is at an earlier stage of development in the early years than in the rest of the school.

The personal development programme has its strengths. For example, pupils learn about diversity and show consistently inclusive attitudes towards others. However, pupils' understanding of different faiths is limited, and the school does not provide a selection of clubs. The school is alert to this. Having rightly prioritised improvements to the curriculum, the school is yet to implement plans to improve pupils' personal development. This means that pupils do not currently benefit from a broad set of experiences.

Behaviour is positive across the school. Pupils know the rules well and understand why these are important. In lessons, they respond promptly to teachers' instructions and follow clear routines. Pupils attend well. Where needed, effective work with families helps pupils to improve their attendance.

Parents are supportive of the school, recognising the recent improvement work that has taken place. Governors provide strong support and challenge for leaders. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths. They are clear about the areas to focus on and are very mindful of staff well-being. Staff feel appreciated. They welcome the training and support they receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In subjects where the curriculum is new, teachers do not have the subject expertise to teach precisely and check pupils' understanding. As a result, some pupils have developed misconceptions and/or have gaps in their knowledge. The school should ensure that ongoing staff training provides staff with the knowledge and confidence to teach all parts of the curriculum consistently well.
- The curriculum in the early years is not as coherently planned and sequenced across all the prime areas of learning as it is for the specific areas. This means that children are not being supported to build knowledge and skills over time as effectively as they could be. The school should ensure that early years curriculum planning clearly identifies what children should learn and in what order, so that children gain the necessary foundations for their future schooling.
- Important aspects of the school's personal development offer have not yet been addressed by the school's recent improvement work. This means that pupils are not building an understanding of different faiths and cultures, and do not benefit from a broad range of opportunities to develop talents and interests. The school must ensure that its plans to develop opportunities for pupils' wider development are implemented successfully, so that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Background

When we have judged 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2020.

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 | 115931 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 10296205 |
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 68 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Paul Griffiths |
| Headteacher | Amy O'Toole |
| Website | www.meonvalleyfederation.hants.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, no pupils attended alternative provision.

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 and spoke with leaders, staff, pupils, parents, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors considered 49 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey, as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- 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 met with the school's special educational needs and/or disabilities co-ordinator.

Inspection team

James Stuart, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Becky Greenhalgh

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024