

# Inspection of Newton Ferrers Church of England Primary School

Newton Ferrers, Dillons the Green, Newton Ferrers Plymouth, Devon PL8 1AS

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Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of school is Penelope Bishop. There is an acting head of school, Jason Stephens. The school is part of The First Federation Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Paul Walker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alex Walmsley.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Newton Ferrers Church of England Primary School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than normal between inspections.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are extremely well prepared to be global citizens. They actively contribute within their local community, nationally and towards the wider world. Pupils develop a strong moral code, supported by the exceptional personal development opportunities on offer. They are very kind and welcoming to their peers and adults alike. Pupils are considerate of everyone's needs, guided by their school value of 'love'.

Pupils meet the high expectations the school has of their behaviour. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are calm and enjoyable. Many pupils have leadership responsibilities, which they undertake with pride. Bullying ambassadors and mental health champions support pupils to play happily together.

Most pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning. They study an engaging curriculum. It has ambitious vocabulary and oracy skills at its core. For example, pupils enjoy participating in regular discussions and debates.

Pupils take part in the many musical and sporting opportunities on offer. They benefit from the extensive and well-planned extra-curricular clubs available. Staff ably nurture pupils' talents and interests, so they flourish. Pupils leave the school as confident, well-rounded individuals.

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

The academic curriculum has undergone significant development. Leaders, at all levels, have ensured it is ambitious in all subjects. The school considers what pupils should learn and by when. For example, there is careful consideration and support provided for pupils in mixed-age classes to build upon their prior knowledge. However, within the wider curriculum, pupils do not write purposefully, which limits their ability to practise and apply their knowledge in each subject.

Most pupils are attentive in lessons and enjoy learning. In many subjects, teaching supports pupils to discuss and make thoughtful links between different aspects of what they have learned. For example, in history, older pupils recognise how civilisations overlap in time. However, in some subjects, the way the curriculum is taught does not support some disadvantaged pupils to fully extend their knowledge and skills.

The school has a steadfast approach to teaching phonics. It ensures that all pupils learn to understand and apply the alphabetic code. Children learn phonics as soon as they start in the early years. In the Nursery Year, children join in with songs and rhymes. This helps them to be ready to learn the sounds that letters make in the Reception Year. The school quickly identifies pupils who need extra help, which they receive in a timely and effective way. The school's pupil librarians support the positive culture of reading across the school. Pupils regularly visit the library to select books to read for pleasure. One pupil, for example, shared that reading is 'a

little holiday in your head'. Pupils value the 'birthday book' donations, which add favourite stories to their class reading areas.

Staff undertake valuable professional development opportunities. For example, staff use what they have learned to effectively support pupils' social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Pupils who need to, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), successfully use 'the cocoon' as a calm space to regulate their emotions in readiness to learn.

Parents and carers appreciate the high levels of pastoral support the school provides for their children. This results in children in the early years quickly learning how to make friends and play kindly with each other. This respectful ethos extends throughout the school. It encourages most pupils to attend school regularly.

The school places pupils' personal development as a 'thread' throughout everything. Staff use 'ethos, environment, diversity and communication' as drivers to prepare pupils exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. Pupils discuss and debate the importance of fundamental British values knowledgeably. They have an in-depth understanding of issues related to diversity. They are passionate that 'no-one should be discriminated against'.

Furthermore, pupils learn about and begin to take responsibility for their own safety. They attend regular woodland sessions to develop practical and survival skills. The school's links with other countries helps pupils to fully understand, respect and show empathy towards how other people live. Pupils use their entrepreneurial skills to raise money for the school and the charities they choose.

The school, alongside the trust, drives school improvement diligently. Staff are positive about their workload because they are 'never asked to do unnecessary tasks'. Staff, pupils and parents all describe the school as a 'community'. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the effective communication they receive about their children's experience of 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, the way in which the curriculum is taught does not help some pupils to learn successfully. As a result, some disadvantaged pupils do not fully extend their knowledge and skills. The school and the trust should ensure that the curriculum is taught in a way that supports every pupil to achieve in all subjects.

- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to write purposefully within the wider curriculum. This limits their ability to extend and apply their subject knowledge to different contexts. The school and the trust should ensure that pupils practise writing across the whole curriculum, so that they develop the knowledge and skills they need for their future 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137664
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288181
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Alex Walmsley
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Paul Walker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Penelope Bishop
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.newton-ferrers.devon.sch.uk">www.newton-ferrers.devon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The acting head of school began his role in October 2023.
- The school is part of The First Federation Trust.
- The school has a nursery provision for two-, three- and four-year-old children.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England primary school. The last section 48 inspection took place on 9 November 2016. The next section 48 inspection is due to be conducted within the 2023/24 academic year.

## 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 both the acting head of school and the substantive head of school. Inspectors also met with trustees, hub board members and trust staff, including the trust CEO, the director of school improvement, the school improvement officer and the trust SEMH advisory teacher.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector 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 spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection to gauge their views of the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Donna Briggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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