

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Newark Orchard School

London Road, Balderton, Newark NG24 3AL

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 November 2024

Outcome

Newark Orchard School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

From the early years to the sixth form, pupils enjoy attending this school. Pupils in this school, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), say that staff are caring and supportive. Staff make sure pupils' safety and well-being are at the centre of everything they do. Pupils say they feel safe. They know they can talk to adults if they have any concerns. Staff know pupils extremely well. Staff support pupils to manage their emotions when they find situations challenging.

The school environment is calm and welcoming. Staff expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Pupils conduct themselves around the school in a sensible and orderly way. Staff are nearby to support pupils if they need help. Pupils behave well in lessons. They are respectful to staff and get on well with each other.

Pupils enjoy taking part in different trips such as a residential visit to a farm. Pupils develop their leadership skills as members of the school council.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent represented the views of many by saying: 'The staff at Newark Orchard have been wonderful since my daughter started in September 2023. I couldn't wish for better people to be looking after my daughter.'

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious. It consists of carefully planned curriculum pathways that meet pupils' different needs. Staff carefully adapt their teaching for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Staff build personalised goals for pupils into lessons throughout the school day. These are based on pupils' education, health and care

plans (EHC plan). In addition, staff receive training to support pupils with complex physical and medical needs to access the curriculum.

Pupils learn a broad curriculum that includes information technology, music and art and design, as well as the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils regularly revisit prior learning to ensure they remember important knowledge. Staff make sure that pupils can apply learning from one subject to another. For example, pupils learn how to count in many different ways in mathematics using a variety of resources. Pupils apply this knowledge when they measure in both geography and design and technology lessons. Staff use pupils' EHC plans and ongoing checks on what they know to identify pupils' strengths and gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils' communication is also central to the curriculum. Staff work together to find the best methods for some pupils to communicate and develop their language skills. This includes the use of Makaton as well as technology. As a result, these pupils can answer questions in lessons and express themselves.

Reading is a priority. Staff read to pupils daily. Staff carefully choose books and texts to broaden pupils' understanding of the topics they are studying. For example, 'When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit' teaches pupils about the rise of the Nazis, discrimination and the Second World War. Staff teach the phonics scheme to small groups or through one-to-one sessions when pupils are ready to learn to read. All staff have received training to deliver the phonics scheme. They do this effectively and consistently.

Pupils attend well. The school is doing all it can to ensure that all pupils attend as often as possible. The school works with families and external agencies to reduce the time pupils have off school.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils know about the importance of eating a healthy diet. Pupils, including those in the sixth form, take part in a wide range of activities that help them prepare for adulthood. For example, pupils learn about personal care, cooking, managing money and how to use public transport. Pupils also learn about diversity and equality. However, they do not recall what they have been taught about other cultures and faiths accurately or in great depth. This could limit how well they are prepared for life in modern Britain.

Careers education, information advice and guidance is skilfully woven into the curriculum. It is meaningful and relevant to pupils. Relationships with internship and work experience partners are strong. The school involves parents in helping their children make informed choices for the next stage of their education and adulthood. Many pupils go on to college placements.

Governors have a detailed understanding of the school. This allows them to both support and challenge the school's work effectively. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities.

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff receive training to help them fully support pupils in their learning. Staff are proud to work at the school. They know their workload is always considered and leaders listen to their views.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's personal development offer does not ensure pupils develop a secure understanding of all aspects of British society. For example, pupils do not have a firm understanding of different faiths and cultures. As a result, this limits how well they are prepared for life in modern Britain. The school needs to ensure that the planned experiences in the personal development offer provide pupils with the knowledge they need to gain a firm understanding of different faiths and cultures, preparing them fully for life in modern Britain.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in 11 and 12 June 2019.

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	130996
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10347495
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	24
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Laura Redfern
Headteacher	Matt Joyce
Website	www.newarkorchard.notts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- All pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan. The school caters for pupils with a broad range of SEND, including autism, speech, language and communication needs, moderate learning difficulty or profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school does not use 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 held meetings with leaders, curriculum leaders, teachers, pupils and wider staff.
- Inspectors 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 listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime.
- The lead inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted online surveys for staff and parents. An inspector spoke to parents during the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and governors.
- The lead inspector spoke with the school's local authority school improvement adviser on the telephone.

Inspection team

Stephen Long, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mike Pride

Ofsted Inspector

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