Inspection of Newtown School

Berkhampstead Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 3AT

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 July 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this inclusive and nurturing school where the school's values of 'caring, curiosity and courage' are lived by all. They know that kindness and fairness are expected from everyone. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will listen and help them if they have any worries.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils respond positively and show pride in their work. Typically, pupils are focused and confidently share their ideas. This creates a positive learning environment where pupils are motivated and eager to learn. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally.

Pupils understand the importance of treating others with respect. The school's nurture provision is high-quality, and pupils have access to a range of support when needed. At playtimes, pupils play cooperatively and show care for one another. All pupils are included in every aspect of school life.

The school offers a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom. Pupils enjoy clubs, trips and special events, which help them develop confidence and resilience. Pupils are proud of their school. Most pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.

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

The school provides a broad and ambitious curriculum that reflects the needs of its pupils. Leaders have ensured that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, access the full range of subjects. The curriculum is carefully sequenced in most subjects, particularly in reading and mathematics. This enables pupils to securely build knowledge and skills over time and confidently recall key learning.

Reading is a clear priority for the school. From the start of early years, pupils follow a well-structured phonics programme with consistency and fidelity. Staff deliver phonics lessons with accuracy and expertise. Pupils read books that match their phonics knowledge and receive timely support if they fall behind. As a result, most pupils become fluent and confident readers.

In mathematics, leaders have worked well with external partners to improve pupils' fluency and number sense. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary precisely, apply their knowledge to problems and explain their thinking accurately. In early years, children develop strong number skills through well-planned activities and the use of practical resources. This provides a secure foundation for future learning.

Staff benefit from secure subject knowledge and present new learning clearly. They use questioning to check pupils' understanding effectively. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, who benefit from targeted support. Staff use a range

of strategies to support pupils to access learning. The Nest, the school's dedicated SEND space, supports pupils with complex needs effectively.

Checks on pupils' learning are used well in some subjects to identify gaps and inform teaching. They are not used consistently across the curriculum to check understanding or address misconceptions. As a result, some pupils do not build securely on prior learning or retain key knowledge over time.

In the early years, children benefit from a rich and well-structured environment. Typically, adults support children's learning well through high-quality interactions. Children are curious, confident and well prepared for Year 1. Children in early years successfully manage their own feelings and behaviour. This prepares children well for the transition to Year 1.

Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. They understand the school's clear expectations. In turn, staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. As a result, the school is calm and orderly, and pupils are supported well to develop self-control.

Overall, attendance is improving. Leaders work productively with families and external agencies to improve attendance. However, absence remains too high for some key groups of pupils. Leaders recognise that further action is needed to ensure that all pupils attend regularly and benefit fully from their education.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development through a structured programme of enrichment. Pupils understand the fundamental British values and demonstrate respect for different cultures and beliefs. Staff promote pupils' awareness of physical and mental well-being and support them in recognising and managing negative emotions. This supports pupils to build positive relationships and contribute actively to school life.

Leaders are committed to continuous improvement. They have created an inclusive school culture. Leaders are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. This helps staff to feel valued and supported. Professional development is thoughtfully scheduled and aligned with the school's priorities. Governors know the school well, fulfil their statutory duties and provide appropriate challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not established a consistent approach to assessment across all subjects. As a result, in some subjects, the school is not able to identify and address gaps in

pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school should ensure that assessment is used effectively in all subjects to support pupils' progress through the curriculum.

- Attendance remains too low for some groups of pupils, particularly those with SEND, from disadvantaged backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language. This limits their learning and progress over time. The school should continue to work proactively with families and external partners to reduce persistent absence and improve attendance for all pupils, ensuring that no group is disproportionately affected.

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	110217
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10379730
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anthony Fortgang
Headteacher	Hayley England
Website	www.newtown.education
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 March 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a nursery and admits children from the age of two years.
- The school currently does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first graded 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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally during social times.
- Inspectors met some parents to gain their views of the school. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text submissions. They also took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- 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.

Inspection team

Stuart Bevan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lorraine Greco	Ofsted Inspector

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