

Newbottle Primary Academy

Houghton Road, Newbottle, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear DH4 4EE

Inspection dates

18–19 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have high expectations that are shared by pupils and staff. Their commitment to the development of teaching and learning has led to a vibrant learning culture that enables pupils to make good progress.
- Leaders have developed approaches to joint planning and well-resourced learning that encourage high levels of pupil engagement and concentration.
- Leaders have developed strong systems to check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and, as a result, have an accurate view of standards.
- Governors are closely involved in the life of the school. They have the necessary expertise to hold leaders to account for key aspects of performance.
- All teachers promote a positive culture of respect where pupils are consistently polite and courteous to one another and adults.
- Provision in the early years provides children with an effective foundation to their learning, especially in Nursery.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. Teachers are committed to the welfare and well-being of their pupils.
- Although the progress of disadvantaged pupils dipped in 2016, these pupils are now making better progress as a result of close tracking and good teaching.
- Levels of absence and persistent absence are below those seen nationally. Clear systems are in place to support attendance. Pupils are happy at school and value their education.
- The most able pupils do not make strong progress. Teaching does not consistently challenge them to work at greater depth.
- In 2016, pupils' outcomes in reading were below those achieved nationally. Pupils' ability to effectively infer and deduce meaning from text and their understanding of vocabulary and word meanings are still developing.
- New approaches to teaching help pupils to discuss and reflect upon their learning but are not yet consistently applied between subjects and classes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of the most able pupils by providing:
 - more opportunities to move their learning on quickly and apply their knowledge and understanding in order to work at greater depth
 - clear guidance on how they can work at greater depth.
- Further develop pupils' reading skills to ensure that pupils reach higher standards by the end of each key stage by:
 - building a stronger understanding of vocabulary and word meanings
 - developing pupils' abilities to infer and deduce meaning from the context of different types of text.
- Continue to diminish any differences in the progress of disadvantaged pupils by:
 - closely tracking their progress
 - matching teaching, additional interventions and resources closely to their needs.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders continually strive to improve the quality of teaching and learning and respond to the rigour of new assessment demands. Their actions to develop the ability of pupils to reflect upon their learning have contributed to highly effective classroom discussion and positive progress, although these initiatives are not effectively implemented across all subjects and year groups.
- Senior leaders have maintained good progress across the school. They check pupils' progress regularly and have developed an accurate view of pupils' performance. As a result of close tracking, teachers are able to respond promptly to address any underachievement and plan interventions to support pupils to make better progress.
- Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's overall strengths and areas for improvement. They have developed appropriate improvement plans that have a history of yielding improvement. In 2015/06, leaders targeted better outcomes in mathematics and spelling and grammar, and both these areas improved in the end-of-year assessments in 2016.
- Senior leaders and new subjects and standards teams carry out regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and the standard of work in books. These processes have led to good standards of work and presentation for the vast majority of pupils.
- Performance management arrangements are robust and closely checked by leaders and governors. Whole-school priorities cascade into the targets of teachers at all levels and are aligned closely to the progress that pupils make. Teachers' performance is regularly reviewed against their targets, their teaching and the progress pupils make.
- The leadership of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective and supports current pupils in making good progress. Although their progress in reading declined in 2016, current support is strong. Differentiated support and dedicated resources effectively support pupils' reading and understanding. Clear scaffolds and prompts led to good progress in writing in English and other subjects.
- Leaders assiduously track the impact of the use of pupil premium funding to improve provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This contributed to strong progress in external assessments in 2015. Although outcomes in 2016 were weaker at both key stages 1 and 2, the current progress of disadvantaged pupils is much stronger in all subjects. School tracking information shows that differences in progress and attainment are diminishing rapidly.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. The clear focus upon developing pupils' skills and understanding in reading, writing and mathematics is complemented by topics that extend knowledge and understanding in subjects such as science, history and geography. Leaders have developed the use of outdoor learning to support pupils in developing wider environmental awareness and in managing risks and problem solving. Pupils can access extensive extra-curricular activities in sport and music and residential experiences, including to an outdoor pursuits centre in the Lake District.

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A cohesive programme aligns key assembly themes to work carried out in class. Pupils explore different forms of worship and show a respect for equalities, respecting differences of faith, race and sexual orientation.
- Funding from the government to promote sport and increase physical activity is being used successfully. In 2016, pupils developed a range of skipping skills with a specialist coach, culminating in participation in a skipping festival. Funds were also used to develop the whole-school use of outdoor spaces.
- The school receives effective support from a school improvement partner who provides a review of pupils' progress. The school also works alongside a safeguarding consultant to ensure that practices are rigorous and up to date.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. The governing body knows the school well and has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors use their school improvement partner to bring additional objective analysis of school performance that supports them in holding leaders to account.
- Governing body committees provide a regular focus on pupils' progress and curriculum provision. Minutes of governing body meetings show that they question the progress of particular groups of pupils and the impact of additional funding, such as the school's use of the pupil premium.
- Governors have shown appropriate diligence in overseeing the recent expansion of the academy trust and managed the transition in leadership structures effectively. One parent praised the 'seamless' transition from the previous headteacher to his successor.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders take their responsibilities for pupils' welfare very seriously. They commission support from a safeguarding expert to ensure that staff are aware of key developments and that training is up to date.
- Leaders carry out rigorous checks to ensure the suitability of adults working on site. Concerns over pupils' welfare are pursued thoroughly and the school works closely with other agencies to support and promote pupils' well-being. They are currently pursuing new partnerships to raise awareness of pupils' emotional and mental health.
- Pupils feel safe in school and the vast majority of their parents agree. Pupils believe that bullying is extremely rare and that clear procedures are in place to support them with any concerns they may have. They talk clearly about the actions they can take to stay safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have developed a vibrant learning culture where teachers plan collaboratively and reflect upon their practice, leading to learning that engages pupils and leads to good progress. Pupils are encouraged to regularly discuss their learning and this develops their articulacy and self-confidence. Learning is effectively managed as pupils are quick to settle and eager to learn as a result of clear classroom routines and good teaching.
- Teachers develop pupils' writing skills by enabling them to write in a range of styles and by encouraging high standards of accuracy with spelling and punctuation. Pupils are able to discuss the effects of particular metaphors and similes and use grammatical features to add depth to their writing. Teachers sequence writing activities to develop increasing independence.
- Leaders and teachers have particular expertise that has developed new approaches to the teaching of mathematics. In lessons and books, there were numerous examples of pupils developing fluent approaches to arithmetical methods and problem solving that were supporting the majority of pupils in making good rates of progress.
- Teachers have responded purposefully to the dip in reading outcomes evident in 2016 by building a robust reading culture. Across the school, pupils talked enthusiastically about approaches to reading that were developing their interest and enthusiasm. Reading records encourage pupils to read at home with their parents, while new reading schemes were developing access to a wider range of texts and stronger comprehension skills. As one child said, 'we are now digging deeper into books.'
- More rigorous explorations of vocabulary are also deepening pupils' inference and deduction skills. Even so, pupils still do not have a strong enough understanding of vocabulary and word meanings. Their ability to infer and deduce meaning from the context of different types of text still needs further development to enable them to reach the higher standards.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils read and were impressed by the clarity of their reading. Less able pupils used decoding strategies to help them pronounce unfamiliar words and on one occasion received support from other pupils. The most able pupils read with fluency and show perceptive textual understanding.
- Teachers effectively provide oral and written feedback in line with the school's policy that helps pupils to improve. Assessment systems are enabling teachers to track pupils' progress and address any underachievement more swiftly by modifying their teaching or organising additional support and interventions.
- Small-group work and dedicated resources are helping pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. Inspectors observed pupils using different coloured overlays to help them to read text more readily, while well-planned writing prompts supported strong progress in writing.
- Teaching in the early years is particularly stimulating. The creative use of resources and imaginative planning encourage active and purposeful learning from the moment children arrive. Children are happy, engaged and curious through the many stimulating opportunities to learn.

- Mostly, teachers work effectively with teaching assistants to plan and provide well-targeted support that is contributing towards the improving progress for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and lower ability pupils. On occasions, this joint planning works less effectively in mathematics.
- Teaching does not consistently enable the most able pupils to reach levels of greater depth. They are not given sufficient opportunities to move on in their learning or apply their literacy and numeracy skills in more advanced ways.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Key teachers deliver specific age-related programmes that increase pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe from potentially harmful situations. Leaders are also developing initiatives to promote pupils' emotional and mental health.
- Pupils expressed appreciation of the kindness shown by their teachers and fellow pupils. They feel that bullying is extremely rare and are confident that adults would address any unacceptable behaviour. Pupils value facilities such as the 'worry box' where they can confidentially post any concerns that will be addressed by teachers and fellow pupils.
- In discussion with inspectors, parents valued the supportive ethos of the school and the care and concern shown by teachers and teaching assistants towards their children.
- Pupils' physical well-being is promoted through encouragement to participate in a wide range of sporting activities, including dance, athletics, hockey and skipping and through the developing use of outdoor spaces.
- Pupils are able to discuss personal safety and the actions that the school has taken to help them keep safe. They demonstrated a good awareness of how to keep safe online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are kind and considerate to one another and work alongside their working partners to share ideas and check on the quality of their work. Teachers are developing strong learning behaviours and pupils are confident in rehearsing and expressing their thoughts and opinions, although on occasions the most able are not able to explore learning in greater depth.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and work conscientiously. Incidents of low-level disruption are extremely rare. Behaviour systems encourage positive attitudes to learning and the rare instances of misbehaviour are deftly addressed. Pupils demonstrate pride in their school and their learning that is reflected in the vast majority of their books.
- Rates of absence and persistent absence are below those seen nationally. Pupils value their education and the positive atmosphere that the school provides. Leaders have introduced robust systems to encourage and sustain high levels of attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils are making consistently good progress across a range of subjects. This is clearly evident in the progress over time reflected in their books and learning journals and in their learning in lessons.
- As a result of effective planning, exceptionally well-resourced learning and high-quality teaching, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development in the early years is above that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in the phonics screening check is above those seen nationally. Standards of reading are good and pupils read with clarity. Further reviews of reading records and tracking information illustrate that pupils read widely and with understanding.
- In 2015, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made better progress than that seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress was particularly strong in reading and writing. In 2015, standards of attainment at the end of key stage 1 were significantly above those seen nationally, as they had been over a three-year period. In 2016, however, key stage 1 outcomes were weaker.
- In 2016, pupils at the end of key stage 2 made progress and achieved outcomes above those seen nationally in writing, mathematics, spelling and grammar, and science. Outcomes in reading were weaker.
- The majority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress through effective and well-resourced teaching and tailored support. Although there was evidence of a dip for these pupils in 2016 in contrast with the positive progress in mathematics and writing in 2015, their overall progress remains good. Despite a dip in progress for pupils in Year 6 in 2016, inspection evidence confirms that this group of pupils is achieving well.
- In 2015, disadvantaged pupils made better progress than their peers. Their progress dipped in 2016 however. A thorough review of their work in books shows that they are now making good rates of progress across many year groups and subjects and that differences are clearly diminishing.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantage pupils, are not making consistently strong progress. They are not given regular opportunities to apply their learning and work at greater depth.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with knowledge, skills and abilities that are typically expected for their age. As a result of inventive planning and imaginative teaching, children make good progress and achieve improving levels of development that are above those seen nationally.

- Nursery provision is outstanding. Teachers provide a highly stimulating and exceptionally well-resourced environment where children are inquisitive, curious and show excellent levels of concentration. Adults are adept at talking with and questioning children, which develops children's understanding and their confidence in speaking and listening.
- Parents speak extremely highly of the Nursery provision where the majority of children ran down the path to arrive with smiling faces. One parent described how initial nerves swiftly vanished as with 'the care of the staff, it took only three days before he was skipping in every morning'. Another parent said that her son 'couldn't wait to get here,' and would 'rehearse his learning at home with his baby brother so we always know what's going on.'
- Much productive learning was observed. In Nursery, boys enthusiastically made a large birthday cake and adorned it with candles hidden in the sand. In Reception classes, children explored a winter theme and used this to develop interesting pieces of writing.
- In phonics and numeracy lessons, teachers showed good subject knowledge that supported children in developing positive reading and arithmetical skills, although some phonic sounds need sharper reinforcement by the teacher.
- Teachers monitor children's progress closely and record this accurately. Learning journals across Nursery and Reception show that children make good progress from their starting points. Teachers have an accurate picture of children's abilities and learning needs and, therefore, teaching is precise and progress is good. Parents are engaged in their children's learning, for example joining their children on a science learning day.
- Although the majority of children make good progress, the most able are not consistently challenged to deepen their learning. While much positive writing was evident, fine motor skills are not as closely developed and this hinders the development in writing of some groups of children, particularly the boys.
- Safeguarding practices in the early years are effective and there are no material breaches of statutory welfare requirements as children are safe and well supported.

School details

Unique reference number	140584
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10023852

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	475
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Dutton
Headteacher	Claire Shield
Telephone number	0191 5536566
Website	www.newbottleprimaryacademy.co.uk
Email address	newbottle@aimhigh.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Newbottle Primary Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 February 2014. When its predecessor school, Newbottle Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2016. At the same time, her predecessor became chief executive officer of the Aim High Academy Trust. Two new assistant headteachers also took up their posts in September 2016.
- Newbottle Primary Academy is larger than the average primary school.

- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below average.
- Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and even fewer speak English as an additional language.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club run by the school.
- The school's 2015 results met the government's floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6. Unvalidated results suggest that the school will also meet the government's floor standards in 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons, covering all classes in the school. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors on a number of observations.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the chief executive officer and academy improvement lead and assistant headteachers. The lead inspector also met the chair of the local governing body. The lead inspector met with the school's improvement partner. He also talked to a group of pupils at lunchtime on day one of the inspection.
- Inspectors talked to parents as they dropped their children off at school on day two of the inspection.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, lunchtimes and playtimes.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading from all year groups and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors extensively examined the quality of work in a wide range of books. They discussed pupils' work and their learning with them in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 33 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Darren Marks	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew James	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Pearce	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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