

Newhall Infant School

Sunnyside, Newhall, Swadlincote, DE11 0TJ

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The attainment of pupils over time has been consistently above average in reading and writing. In mathematics it is outstanding.
- Teaching is good. Some teaching is outstanding. Classrooms buzz with the sound of happy pupils who are keen to learn.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception class make a positive start to their education. Good teaching allows them to make good gains in all areas of their learning.
- Pupils feel absolutely safe in school. Their exemplary behaviour and extremely positive attitudes to learning are significant factors in their good achievement.
- Pupils are given good moral and social guidance from the time they enter school, which helps to foster their excellent personal development.
- The headteacher's strong and visionary leadership ensures all staff work as a team. Everyone shows a high level of commitment in wanting the very best for each pupil.
- Leaders have established effective methods for checking on pupils' progress.
- The impact of the good leadership can be seen in the growing strength of teaching and the narrowing of the gap in attainment between boys and girls.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use their knowledge about how well pupils are doing to hold leaders to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils are reaching the nationally expected levels in phonics. Attainment in reading and writing is not as high as that in mathematics, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Marking does not consistently give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- The school action plans for improvement do not have sharp enough criteria for accurately measuring the impact of leaders' actions, particularly in relation to pupil achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, of which three were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence, including the school’s development plan and self-evaluation, monitoring reports, performance management records, policies on child protection and special educational needs, case studies, subject action plans, pupil premium records, the sport premium action plan, parental questionnaire results, attendance records, governing body minutes, safeguarding information and records relating to behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors analysed information on pupils’ achievement over the past three years and the school’s own records of the achievement of different groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ work and listened to a number of pupils read from Year 1 and Year 2.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher, the senior leadership team, the Early Years Foundation Stage, mathematics, literacy and special educational needs leaders, the Chair and other members of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account of 62 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire, and spoke informally to parents and carers.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 41 questionnaires.

Inspection team

David Edwards, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mike Williams

Additional Inspector

Ann Glynne-Jones

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Newhall Infant school is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White-British backgrounds, with a very small number of pupils from various different ethnic backgrounds.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage part-time in the Nursery and full-time in Reception.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with a parent in the armed forces, is below average.
- There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of those who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Close the gap in attainment between mathematics and English by:
 - making sure that all pupils, and particularly the most able, are always given work that will extend their learning in reading and writing
 - ensuring that the teaching of phonics is used more effectively and consistently so that it accelerates pupil progress faster
 - improving the quality of teacher marking and feedback to pupils so that their targets are consistently challenging, and pupils are clear about what they are doing well and are consistently set 'next steps' for their learning
 - give pupils more guidance in mathematics and English to help them to accurately assess the quality of their own learning and thereby accelerate progress even more.
- Ensure that senior leaders and governors include specific and measurable criteria in their school action planning and teacher performance management targets to help them more effectively judge the impact of their actions on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding slightly below those typically found at this age. From these lower starting points, pupils make good progress overall across the school.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and, by the end of Year 2, attainment has often been significantly above national expectations, particularly in mathematics. In 2012 and 2013, there was a slight reduction in standards of writing but they were still above national averages.
- At the end of Year 1, the phonics screening check shows that pupils' understanding of letters and sounds has improved markedly across the school. However, not enough pupils consistently reach or exceed the nationally expected level in this area of learning.
- In 2013 the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected level in reading was in line with other schools, and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels remained above average. The introduction of the 'Project X' reading programme is helping boys, in particular to gain greater enjoyment from their reading and is now accelerating the progress made by all pupils.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is outstanding. From low starting points, they make exceptionally strong progress. At the end of Year 2 in 2013, standards of attainment were well above average and have been for five years. Pupils currently in Year 2 are making brisk progress in mathematics, as for example, in a lesson where pupils were developing their skills in division very successfully.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding achieve almost as well as their peers in both English and mathematics. The school is using the pupil premium funding well to ensure these pupils make good progress, having used these funds to purchase additional teaching and non-teaching support. Their attainment in the subjects is now less than one term below other pupils in the school in both subjects.
- The attainment of some disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has been lower than expected in some years. The school quickly recognised this issue and introduced measures to provide additional support for these pupils, including the use of outside agencies, such as those offering speech therapy and the provision of skilled teaching assistants in classrooms, to accelerate their learning. This is rapidly improving these pupils' rates of progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Nearly all pupils achieve well because of consistently good and sometimes outstanding teaching throughout the school. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well, which helps pupils to maintain their concentration in lessons and to want to do their best.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and use of skilled, open-ended questioning help to move pupils' learning forwards quickly. Appropriate resources are used to support their learning. The consistent use of brisk pace in lessons across the school encourages pupils to remain on task throughout the lesson and to complete their work in good time.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes benefit from a well-organised and stimulating

environment, good teaching and well-planned activities. Teachers know their children well. In a good Reception lesson, the teacher was carefully developing children's writing skills. They were keen to work as independently as possible to write their own sentences about 'Elmer the Elephant'. Another group went around the school on a 'colour hunt'. They identified objects with a range of colours and independently wrote the names of colours. There were good opportunities for the adults to reinforce the use of vocabulary which pupils could use in other subjects.

- Pupils read widely and often, and their reading skills are developing well. They are supported well by arrangements to make sure individuals have the correct reading book for their level of ability. Pupils have reading records which help teachers and parents keep a close eye on their progress. They have a good knowledge of fiction and non-fiction books and a good understanding of what the terms 'author' and 'illustrator' mean.
- Teachers ensure good opportunities to learn phonics (the sounds that letters make) are built into lessons throughout the school. The school recognised weaknesses in pupils' phonic skills were hampering their reading progress and reacted quickly to put intervention programmes in place and to provide additional support to improve reading skills. These are helping to accelerate children's progress.
- Writing is generally taught well but is not as consistently good as it is in mathematics. In one exemplary lesson, pupils were totally engrossed in discussing the role of the narrator in a story and went on to produce work that contained high quality adventurous language and creative sentences. However, on occasions, there is not the same level of challenge given to the most able pupils as is found, for example, in mathematics. The school has recognised the need to improve writing attainment, particularly for the boys. Its intensive efforts have meant that the gap in attainment between boys and girls is now only around one term.
- Mathematics is taught successfully. Progress is much stronger than in reading and writing and pupils are able to use their mathematical skills confidently in other areas of learning.
- Teachers have mostly high expectations but occasionally the needs of the most and least able are not effectively met. The targets for some individual pupils are not challenging enough to help them to achieve what they are capable of over time.
- Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of various groups and are skilled at supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs so that they make good progress. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support this work and ensure pupils are motivated and maintain good attitudes to their learning.
- Although some good examples of marking were seen in pupil's books, for example, in the Reception children's books, teachers' marking does not always indicate what children are doing well and what they need to do to improve further.
- Children are not given sufficient guidance on how to self-assess their own work, so that they can check the quality of the work they have done.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils acquire exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They are proud of their school and eager to learn. They try their very best to succeed and learn to persist when they find something difficult. Pupils get on very well with each other and lessons proceed smoothly to the

accompanying sounds of pupils happily working together. The same is true when pupils are playing together at lunchtimes and during break times.

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. They are considerate, helpful and polite. They know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils readily take responsibility, for example, by helping to tidy up the classroom or the outside learning areas. They quickly learn how to follow instructions, organise themselves and become independent. This contributes well to their personal, social and moral development.
- Pupils say they feel entirely safe in school and their parents agree. Pupils learn about various ways in which they can keep themselves safe, for example on the roads, because the school has excellent programmes to teach them about this.
- Pupils are free from bullying or any form of harassment. School leaders ensure methods for dealing with bullying are in place and the school's excellent programme of personal and social education helps pupils to learn about different types of bullying and how to deal with it, if it should occur.
- Pupils have a good sense of teamwork. This was seen often in lessons, where pupils helped and supported each other. In lessons and assemblies, there are good opportunities for pupils to think and reflect on life's issues.
- All adults are exceptionally vigilant in ensuring pupils' welfare and provide outstanding care. Methods for supporting vulnerable pupils and their families are excellent. Parents who have received this support say how grateful they are and how much it has helped their children.
- Attendance is at the national average. Pupils are eager to come to school and get into lessons because they enjoy learning so much. Attendance has gradually improved because school leaders and governors have made high attendance a priority.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides effective leadership which is centred on pupils' achievement and how teaching can improve this. He has built a strong team spirit, gives a clear sense of direction and expects the very best for all pupils. Staff at all levels are equally ambitious for pupils to achieve well.
- School leaders have established effective systems for evaluating how well pupils are learning and intervene to improve teaching methods where this is needed. For example, leaders acted promptly to raise standards in phonics by changing teaching methods. The school's very rigorous pupil assessment and data tracking systems help leaders to quickly pinpoint if pupils are at risk of underachieving so that they quickly intervene to accelerate progress.
- The headteacher visits classrooms regularly and meets with pupils to look at their books and ascertain how well they are learning. His evaluations of teaching, together with information from the tracking of pupils' progress over time, are shared with teachers and used to ensure teaching continues to be of good and better quality. The appraisal of teachers' performance is securely in place.
- Staff responses to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive and show how much they feel that they are valued and supported. They understand that they are accountable for pupils' progress but also know that they will have opportunities for professional development which will

help them to continue to improve their teaching.

- Teachers are keen to advance their practice and training to enable this is provided regularly. Teachers meet frequently to review pupils' progress and this informs their planning of future lessons. All this is possible because leaders, including subject leaders, have established the clear expectation that teaching and achievement will be kept under review so it can be improved where this is needed. Subject leaders have a good knowledge of the strengths and relative weaknesses in their subject and are increasingly taking effective action to raise standards.
- The school development planning is detailed and correctly identifies what aspects of learning need improving. However, the criteria for judging the success of school actions are not precise enough and do not include rigorous measurable criteria in relation to pupil progress. The same is true of teacher performance management targets.
- Parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire and those who talked to inspectors were overwhelmingly supportive of the school and would recommend it to other parents. They noted particularly how approachable the staff are and the high quality of communication between home and school. This has created a highly cohesive community in which parents and carers feel valued. Their responses to the online 'Parent View' support this.
- From the Nursery and Reception classes onwards, the school contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in activities related to music and drama. Art is a particular strength of the school. The 'Children Around the World' display, indicates children's understanding of the lives and cultures of people in their own country and in other parts of the world.
- The additional funding for school sport is being used wisely to enhance the training of teachers so that they can extend the range of sports on offer. This was discussed at a recent governor's meeting and the school is working on a detailed plan of action.
- Because the local authority has judged the school to be successful, it has adopted a light-touch approach in supporting the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have received the training needed to perform their duties and are well informed about pupils' progress. Their involvement in school monitoring and evaluation procedures helps them to have a clear view of pupil progress and achievement. The Chair of the Governing Body knows the school particularly well. Governors successfully deploy pupil premium funding and consequently, pupils in receipt make good progress. Governors ensure safeguarding requirements are fully met. They ensure the effective appraisal of teachers and that any pay awards are merited. Governors regularly make visits to classrooms and this helps them to form a sound view of the quality of learning and teaching.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	112636
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	425104

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	307
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charlotte Burton
Headteacher	Neil Loftus
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2010
Telephone number	01283 216496
Fax number	N/A
Email address	office@newhall-inf-nurs.derbyshire.sch.uk

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