

Inspection of Newton Poppleford Primary School

School Lane, Newton Poppleford, Sidmouth, Devon EX10 0EL

Inspection dates: 11–12 March 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in March 2007 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 13 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like this school and attend regularly. They are keen to learn and behave well. The shared values of resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness, responsibility and readiness are at the heart of the school community. Pupils think highly of staff. Consequently, relationships are strong.

Leaders have recently changed how the curriculum is organised. Pupils learn some subjects, such as music and religious education, on 'Wow Wednesdays'. Pupils enjoy this approach.

Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in English and mathematics. They work hard to support pupils well. However, the curriculum has not been consistently strong in every subject in the past. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils feel safe at the school. They know who to turn to if they have concerns. They are confident that staff would support them and sort out any difficulties they have. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens. When it does, they trust staff to deal with it quickly.

The school's ethos encourages pupils to lead healthy lifestyles. The 'Take Ten' challenge encourages pupils to exercise and reduce their stress levels. The high level of care, including the work of the school mentor and play therapist, helps to support pupils with their social, emotional and mental health needs well.

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

Children get off to a flying start in the early years. Leaders have a clear understanding of what they want children to learn. Adults help children to grow in confidence. There is a sharp focus on children's language development in the pre-school. This is built on further in Reception. As a result, children develop a strong understanding of phonics for reading and writing, and see success right from the start.

In key stage 1, the reading curriculum sets out clearly what is to be taught and when. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to teach pupils to use and apply their phonics so that they read well. Any pupils who fall behind catch up quickly because of the precise support they receive.

Across the school, motivational talks with visiting authors promote the love of reading. Reading is threaded through the curriculum to provide connections with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 were keen to explain how their class novel, 'Hitler's Canary', is helping them learn about the Second World War before they study it in history.

Leaders' actions to improve the mathematics curriculum are proving effective. In the early years, children learn a lot. They get the strong foundations they need for Year 1. Across the school, the mathematics curriculum ensures that pupils' learning builds on what they already know. For example, pupils use basic number facts to solve increasingly complex problems. Nonetheless, there are occasions when pupils do not learn all the mathematical vocabulary they need. This prevents some pupils from explaining their thinking and excelling in mathematics.

The school's approach to writing provides pupils with the knowledge they need to spell, punctuate and use grammar accurately. However, there are occasions when pupils do not use everything they have learned in English, to organise their writing consistently well. Some older pupils do not consider how to order and make connections between paragraphs. This holds pupils back from achieving their very best.

Pupils develop their knowledge securely over time in some subjects, for example in French. They make connections across sequences of work and this helps them learn more and remember more. However, the curriculum is not as well-structured in every subject. Many curriculum leaders are new to their roles. They have not checked that teachers are supporting pupils to develop a deep knowledge in their subjects. Consequently, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the curriculum effectively. Staff know pupils' needs well. Pupils receive caring support in class and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy sport and benefit from a well-planned physical education (PE) curriculum. Carefully planned activities make sure that everyone can take part in games. Extra support is available for some pupils with SEND. This helps to improve their balance and coordination.

Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they hold leaders to account for bringing about improvements effectively, for example improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Staff feel that leaders, including governors, value them and support their work.

Lots of worthwhile experiences help pupils to develop personally and socially. For example, pupils enjoy helping to improve the environment through the eco-council. Pupils enjoy learning about Christianity and other religions. In 'Wow Week', pupils learn about a wide variety of countries, such as Australia and Japan. This helps them to understand about other cultures and customs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff know pupils well and take their welfare seriously. They are vigilant to signs that a pupil may be at risk, and act swiftly to report concerns. The designated safeguarding leaders work effectively with

external agencies. They keep detailed records of their work, so they can check on progress and follow up on actions taken to keep pupils safe. This ensures that families and pupils receive support in a timely manner. Leaders make sure that the school's recruitment and training procedures are robust.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not yet planned coherently in every subject. The actions leaders have already taken to train staff in how to plan and deliver the curriculum demonstrate that they are in the process of bringing this about. For this reason, the transition arrangement has been applied. Leaders need to ensure the curriculum is well planned and implemented in every subject so that pupils know and remember more across the curriculum.
- The school's high expectations of writing are not applied consistently well. Consequently, a minority of pupils do not use all the writing techniques they have been previously taught, such as paragraphing. Teachers do not routinely expect pupils take to ownership of organising their writing sufficiently well. Leaders need to ensure that teachers enable pupils to use and apply their writing knowledge and skills so that they can excel in their writing in every subject.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	113103
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10111623
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julia Bramble
Headteacher	Stuart Vaughan
Website	http://www.newton-popleford.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2007

Information about this school

- The school has moved to a new building since the previous inspection.
- There is a pre-school on the school site that is managed by the governing body. It takes children from ages two to four. The pre-school was included in the inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in January 2014 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 13 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made most outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, teachers, the early years leader, members of the local governing body and the leads for pupils with SEND. The lead inspector also spoke with a local authority representative.
- We did deep dives in: reading, writing, mathematics, PE and French. We also considered the geography curriculum. We met with senior and curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils. We visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work and talked to pupils. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read.
- We evaluated documentary and other types of information, including evidence relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sue Costello, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Berry

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020