

Inspection of a good school: Newdigate CofE Endowed Aided Infant School

Village Street, Newdigate, Dorking, Surrey RH5 5DJ

Inspection date:

26 September 2023

Outcome

Newdigate CofE Endowed Aided Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Newdigate and love going to school. The school's strong Christian ethos of 'In God's hands we learn and grow' drives everything the school does. From children's first day in Reception, they feel part of a 'family'. The school strives to nurture every pupil to do their best. This is reflected by one parent's comment, 'Newdigate is a delightful school, small in size but big in impact and effectiveness.'

Excellent induction procedures focus on individuals' needs, ensuring children settle well, follow routines and make friends quickly. Pupils feel safe because they trust the adults that look after them. They know that there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a worry or concern. Relationships at all levels are very strong.

The school values pupils as individuals, providing support for learning and emotional well-being. Every child has a great chance to succeed. Teachers model perseverance and stamina to help all pupils learn. As a result, pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils meet the high expectations teachers set for learning and behaviour. This is reflected in pupils' strong relationships with one another and their very positive attitudes to learning

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

The school's ambitious curriculum is designed to inspire pupils to develop a love of learning, enabling all pupils to reach their potential. Topics have been carefully chosen to capture pupils' imagination and stimulate their interest. The school has considered the sequence in which pupils should learn essential knowledge in different subjects. In the vast majority of subjects, this enables pupils to build on what they already know. In a few subjects, some of the steps pupils need to take have not been identified precisely enough. This means some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Reading is a high priority in school. The school regards reading as the 'gateway' for all learning. Phonics is very well taught by well-trained teachers and support staff. Children in

Reception are introduced to initial letter sounds and simple blending immediately. A structured and consistent approach to reading means that pupils are confident and achieve well. Teachers regularly check pupils' progress and take swift action if they fall behind. The school has a successful 'reading café', where parents share books with their children. Consequently, pupils develop a love of reading.

Early number is well taught in the school. Younger children are given many opportunities during the day to count backwards and forwards to help commit patterns to memory. Mathematics is well taught and a strength of the school. The structured approach to teaching mathematics enables all pupils to achieve well. Teachers emphasise mathematical language in lessons. As a result, pupils can explain their answers by using the correct mathematical terms.

Staff have the right levels of professional expertise which they use to help pupils to learn effectively. Early years staff are skilled practitioners and show high levels of care for children. They adapt tasks and activities for those children who find learning more difficult. Teachers have good subject knowledge across the curriculum. They provide interesting and fun opportunities to engage pupils and help them learn.

Teachers regularly review pupils' progress. They intervene if pupils do not understand learning. Teachers modify their approaches so that these pupils get the support they need to succeed. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are strong and low-level disruption is uncommon. Teachers make lessons active. Pupils particularly like the opportunities to learn outdoors in the forest school. Teachers make good links between subjects such as geography, art and physical education

Staff show high levels of trust in one another leading to a strong culture of mutual support for their well-being. The school's decisions about staff workload are considered collectively. Decisions are based on what will have the best impact in the classroom for pupils.

The school provides many opportunities to promote pupils' wider development. Central to this is the school's 'Is it OK?' culture which teaches pupils to think about their actions. Adults and pupils check with one another to make sure actions are acceptable and the right thing to do. This develops an understanding of making good decisions. The school empowers pupils to speak out if they are not happy with a particular situation. Pupils are tolerant and respectful. Pupils can take up many roles of responsibility in school. They especially like the ability to elect their 'Little Governors'. Pupils used this as an example of democracy, as learned as part of fundamental British values.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few foundation subjects, the school has not yet identified the content pupils need to learn precisely enough. As a result, some pupils are unable to build upon the knowledge they already know and commit learning to their long-term memory effectively. The school should make sure that the order and content of the essential knowledge pupils need to know is identified in all subject areas so the curriculum is fully effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in March 2018.

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	125192
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10287949
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alok Agarwal
Principal	Paula Bliss
Website	www.newdigate.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-size school
- The school has an executive principal and a head of school.
- The school is part of the Mole Valley Gateway Church of England School Federation
- The school runs a separate on-site pre-school
- Before- and after-school provision is managed by the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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.
- The inspectors met with the executive principal, head of school and other school staff.
- The inspectors met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspectors also spoke on the telephone with a representative of the

local authority and a representative of Guilford diocese.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with the subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors spoke to staff and groups of pupils from different year groups. They observed behaviour in classrooms and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The views of staff and pupils, including responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys, were taken into account.
- The responses to Ofsted Parent View, including written responses, were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Bill James, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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