

Inspection of a good school: Newnham Croft Primary School

Chedworth Street, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB3 9JF

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 June 2024

Outcome

Newnham Croft Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Newnham Croft is a nurturing and inclusive school where pupils are happy and safe. Whether pupils join straight away in the early years or later from a different setting or country, they can be sure of a warm welcome. Pupils recognise 'everyone is different'. They are supportive of each other, particularly older pupils with younger ones. Parents typically say 'there is a friendly, community feel around the school'.

Pupils proudly look after their school and the local environment. They enjoy the responsibility of being part of the eco committee or the school council. They take these roles seriously.

Pupils like to challenge themselves. They share the school's ambition for them to learn what they need to succeed. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Teachers have high expectations. Pupils rise to these. Pupils respond quickly to the many signals from teachers to gain their attention, including bells or claps.

Pupils enjoy their 'fun' lessons. They energetically use the school's extensive grounds. Pupils love the many different climbing frames, games areas and quiet spaces in the playground. They play well together with their friends.

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

The school has recently redesigned the curriculum. It is now ambitious and meets the needs of the diverse community the school serves. Leaders have carefully considered the important knowledge they want pupils to learn. Across subjects, teachers introduce new content that builds on what pupils already know and can do. In science, for example, pupils progress from basic observational tasks, such as bird watching or minibeasts hunts,

to more complex tasks in later years. These involve planning, carrying out and evaluating practical experiments. Pupils achieve well as they have the prior knowledge they need when new learning is introduced.

Reading is taught well across the school. There is effective, targeted support where needed, to help pupils to catch up. The new phonics scheme ensures children get off to a flying start. In the Reception class, they develop the skills to apply their phonics confidently in writing, preparing them well for key stage 1.

Leaders have carefully selected books so that children hear a wide range of stories from many cultures and countries. Pupils have recently designed a 'café library' to encourage peers to try their chosen favourites. As pupils become fluent, they use a range of strategies to help them understand what they are reading. As a result, they achieve well.

Teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the specific needs of pupils. For example, they provide pupils with translation aids or resources to support them in their understanding of the tasks set. This enables pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the curriculum alongside their peers. As a result, they learn well.

On occasion, teachers plan work for pupils that is not so well adapted to their needs. In these cases, pupils are not challenged to think more deeply or extend their learning. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. However, overall, the curriculum is taught effectively, enabling pupils to develop crucial skills and retain essential knowledge over time.

Children in early years settle well into routines and develop a high level of independence. The curriculum both inside and outside of the classroom has a considerable impact on their communication and language skills. Adults interact with children effectively. Consequently, children are expertly guided to think carefully about what they are learning. As a result, they use new vocabulary appropriately in their speaking and writing.

Pupils enjoy school. They behave and attend well. Staff have trusting relationships with parents and follow up on attendance issues, supporting families who need it. This work is helping to improve the attendance of individuals and their siblings.

The curriculum supports personal development well. It ensures that pupils learn about a range of diverse religions and themes. This includes parents and people from the local community visiting the school to share their experience and expertise. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online and to look after their own well-being. They enjoy the wide range of visits and experiences that leaders plan to enhance the curriculum.

The governing body knows the school well. Governors make regular visits to the school to check leaders' actions towards school improvement. Staff appreciate the actions leaders have taken to support their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not adapt pupils' work to match their levels of prior knowledge, understanding and skills. At times, the teachers plan work for pupils that is not so well adapted to their needs or does not challenge them appropriately. This means that, every so often, some pupils are not provided with work that helps them achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers set tasks that precisely match pupils' needs so that they build and secure their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2014.

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 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	110658
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10323605
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Danielle Redhead
Headteacher	Edward Ferguson
Website	www.newnhamcroft.cambs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. This includes a new headteacher, who took up the post 18 months ago, new assistant headteachers, a new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and a new chair of the governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and art and design. To complete each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, and spoke with

teachers. She also spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector looked at safeguarding policies, the school's record of pre-employment checks on new staff and a sample of child protection files. The inspector 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 inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the designated safeguarding leads and the SENCo. The inspector held further meetings with other senior and middle leaders, school staff, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, school improvement plans, the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness and school policies.
- There were 104 responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, which were considered alongside 105 free-text responses from parents.
- The inspector also took account of 12 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff and 93 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Ruth Brock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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