

Newfield Secondary School

Lees Hall Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S8 9JP

Inspection dates

14–15 March 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The two co-headteachers have an uncompromising ambition for the school. Since their appointment, their highly effective leadership has led to better teaching, improved behaviour and attendance, and higher attainment for pupils.
- Staff share the leaders' vision and are justifiably proud of the improvements they have seen in their school.
- Middle leaders are an emerging strength of the school. Like senior leaders, they are highly ambitious for their pupils. They use progress data effectively to pinpoint underachievement and put into place effective support.
- The school's systems to promote positive behaviour and attitudes to learning are highly effective. Behaviour both in lessons and about the school is good. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect. The stricter code of conduct led initially to an increase in exclusions. Leaders accept that, although now reducing, the number of exclusions remains too high.
- Governors have the appropriate expertise and skills to provide robust challenge to school leaders. They know the school well and are very clear about improvements which have been made already and about what more needs to be done.
- Leaders undertake regular checks on the quality of teaching. They have taken effective action to eradicate weaker teaching and increase the proportion of good or better teaching. As a result, teaching is good overall and the progress made by pupils has improved considerably over time.
- Pupils feel safe in the school and are very aware of issues that may pose a risk to their health and safety. They know where to go for help and support. Furthermore, they have trust in staff to help them resolve any issues or concerns they may have.
- The Mercia Learning Trust provides highly effective support and challenge to the school. Leaders have developed strong links with the other secondary school and primary schools in the trust.
- Leaders have focused intensively on improving pupils' reading skills. This has been successful.
- Strategies to use homework effectively are starting to have an impact, but there is still scope for further improvement.
- The quality of teaching assistant support is variable across the school.
- Form time is not used consistently well to improve pupils' achievements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to increase the range of behaviour interventions so that the number of permanent and fixed-term exclusions reduces rapidly to below national averages.
- Review the use of form time so that it effectively contributes to pupils' progress.
- Further improve the quality of teaching so that it becomes outstanding by ensuring that:
 - all teachers consistently set work which matches pupils' needs and abilities closely
 - all teaching assistants provide just the right level of support to enable pupils to become independent learners
 - all homework is embedded in line with the school's policies.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The co-headteachers, governors and trust have taken decisive action to strengthen the quality of teaching and improve pupils' outcomes.
- The trust continues to give highly effective support and challenge to the school. The chief executive works closely with the co-headteachers, and the trust board adds another layer of challenge. School leaders have developed strong links with the other schools in the trust. As the school has developed, it has become much more of an equal partner, now offering help and ideas to the other schools as well as receiving support.
- Middle leaders are an emerging strength of the school. Like senior leaders, they are ambitious for their pupils and show no complacency. As a result, teachers in their departments encourage their pupils to aim high. This has had a positive impact on pupils' progress. Middle leaders are proud of the school's success, but determined to make further improvements. They use progress data effectively to pinpoint underachievement in each year group and put into place appropriate support. The leaders of mathematics and English are using the experience they gained from recent national changes in their subjects to support other subject leaders facing those challenges for the first time.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of what is working well in the school and where improvements are necessary. Their plans for development focus well on the most important priorities and the targets they set are clearly measurable.
- Leaders use a range of evidence to determine the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making. This includes lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and rigorous analysis of pupils' progress information. Systems are in place for checking the performance of teachers and identifying areas that require strengthening. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Staff morale is high. Staff retention rates are strong. Leaders are finding it easier to fill vacancies. The many responses to the staff questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the changes staff have seen in their school over the last three years. They are proud of their school and feel valued.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well organised and delivered both through the ethics curriculum and across the school. Enrichment days give pupils further opportunities to develop this aspect of their education. A recent audit showed rich evidence of how the school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils take time to reflect sensitively on their beliefs and values and those of others, and show tolerance and respect. The pupils in the school come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds with 36 different languages, and the harmonious atmosphere in the school is testimony to this work.
- The curriculum is well matched to the needs of the pupils and they make good progress. As a result, the overwhelming majority of pupils at the end of Year 11 move into appropriate further education or employment. Leaders are constantly reviewing the impact of the curriculum and they make changes where appropriate. To cite just

one example, plans are now in place to increase the number of English and mathematics lessons in key stage 3 and to introduce options at the end of Year 8.

- Staff offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Some are subject-based, offering pupils the chance to supplement their learning. Others give pupils opportunities to take part in sport or other activities such as drama or the visual arts. Pupils take up these opportunities, and activities are well attended.
- Additional funding for special educational needs and for disadvantaged pupils is used to good effect. As a result, pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Younger pupils were positive about the opportunity to read in form time. However, inspection evidence shows that form time across the school is not always used effectively. Pupils are not positive universally about this part of the school day. They reported that some useful activities take place, but felt that the time could be put to better use. Sessions observed by inspectors were not always well planned and structured in a way to engage the pupils. As a result, inspectors saw some lack of focus from pupils, which they did not see in timetabled lessons.
- Leaders could explain very clearly why the number of both permanent and fixed-term exclusions was higher than the national average in 2016. Close scrutiny of the paperwork for permanent exclusions showed that leaders did not take these decisions lightly. However, leaders agree that more actions are required to reduce the number of both permanent and fixed-term exclusions further.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very ambitious for the pupils and the staff of the school. They visit the school frequently and talk to pupils and staff. As a consequence, they know the school well. They can see clearly which strategies have brought about improvement and where there is still work to do. They have effective systems in place to ensure that the school is improving.
- Governors are highly skilled and have the necessary expertise to both support and challenge leaders. They have a strong grasp of how to analyse pupils' assessment and could see that there was much to celebrate with the examination results of 2016. They could talk equally knowledgeably about the progress of current pupils in the school. An analysis of governors' minutes confirmed that they are kept well informed of pupils' progress currently.
- Governors have a strong understanding of the finances of the school. They talked with confidence about how they ensure that additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils, special educational needs and Year 7 catch-up programmes is supporting good progress. They understand the link between performance and pay, and are strong advocates for the performance management system in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors are very clear about their responsibility to keep children safe and fulfil their safeguarding duties. Systems and procedures are firmly in place and training

is appropriate and up to date. The school conducts the appropriate checks on the suitability of adults to work with children.

- There is a clear ethos across the school that sets the safety of pupils as the highest priority. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that appropriate action is being taken to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe.
- Leaders have tackled pupils' absence robustly and are tenacious in chasing up non-attendance. As a result, the much-improved attendance, which is now in line with the national average, is contributing well to pupils' safety, well-being and progress.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep safe and assess the risks that might face them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have had a major focus on learning and teaching. They have shown great determination to improve the quality of teaching. Carefully targeted professional development has had a real impact and teachers have responded well to it. In many responses to the staff questionnaire, teachers talk of how they have valued the opportunities to improve their skills. As a result of this better teaching, the progress pupils make has accelerated.
- Teachers and leaders are quick to point out the importance of the part the school's system to promote positive behaviour and attitudes has played in these improvements. Positive relationships and mutual respect feature strongly in the school. Teachers have established purposeful classroom routines which pupils follow without question. This enables lessons to progress smoothly and without interruption.
- Pupils' reading skills have improved because of leaders' relentless focus on this aspect of the school's work. Pupils read fluently and with understanding. Where problems arise for the less confident readers, they are able to sound out the word successfully. Pupils talked positively about the time given in form time for quiet reading, and the library is well used, with staff organising various activities to promote reading.
- Analysis of pupils' workbooks across a range of subjects shows that teachers establish pupils' good habits as soon as they are admitted to the school. Regular assessments are used to measure progress and to pinpoint areas which need further work.
- Teachers know their pupils well and inspectors saw teachers using their annotated class seating plans to deploy the right strategies to support the less able and stretch the most able. At its best, teaching challenges pupils of all abilities. However, some teachers do not set work which matches closely the skills and abilities of their pupils.
- Inspectors saw teaching assistants making a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants support pupils with a range of abilities and intervene promptly when pupils are struggling with their work. However, on occasions, some teaching assistants, who focused on just one individual pupil, did not give that pupil the scope to develop independence.
- Leaders have focused on developing meaningful homework tasks which accelerate progress, and they have had some success. The online system of logging homework

tasks has proved useful too. However, leaders are not complacent and realise that further work is required to embed homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show respect to each other and to the adults they work with. Pupils are proud of their school and are smart in appearance. They recognise the improvements brought about over recent years in their school.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe. They are clear about how to stay safe online. They said that bullying occurs infrequently. They have confidence that the school deals with it effectively.
- Pupils are tolerant and have developed a good understanding of other cultures. Pupils in the school from a wide range of different cultural backgrounds get on well. There are very few racist incidents and records show that staff deal with such incidents effectively. Transgender pupils are treated with respect and accepted fully across the school community.
- Effective careers education and guidance are given throughout the school and leaders have worked hard to raise the aspirations of their pupils. As a result, with very few exceptions, pupils move on to appropriate further education, training or employment at the end of Year 11. More and more pupils are taking up the offer of a place in the sixth form in a trust partner school.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They say that staff apply the school's behaviour and rewards code consistently. As a result, pupils know exactly what is expected of them and this supports their learning well. Overall, their self-confidence has increased but requires boosting further.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's system to promote excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning is highly effective. The procedures for both rewards and sanctions are very clear and teachers apply the system consistently.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent. They settle to their work promptly. As a result, learning proceeds quickly and without interruption.
- A visible presence of staff about the school is central to the philosophy of the school leaders and pupils respond well to that. Their conduct around the school is good and the atmosphere is calm and purposeful.
- Leaders recognise the importance of good attendance and they have put in place a range of successful strategies and procedures to improve overall attendance and reduce the number of persistent absentees. As a result, overall absence has been reduced and is in line with the national figure. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving too, but has not quite reached the national figure for all pupils.

- Leaders have won the 'hearts and minds' of the vast majority of the pupils. There was a steep rise in the number of exclusions as a result of the stricter code of behaviour. The number has started to reduce, but leaders accept that the number of pupils who are excluded is still too high.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Rates of progress have improved significantly since the school opened. In 2016, by the end of Year 11, pupils' progress in a wide range of subjects was above that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Leaders' effective use of pupil premium funding has improved the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was in line with the national average for non-disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 11. Across all year groups in the school, disadvantaged pupils continue to make good progress in line with their peers.
- In 2016 at the end of Year 11, the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made strong progress from their starting points. A review of current pupils' workbooks showed that these pupils continue to make good progress across all year groups.
- Valuable careers advice and guidance, together with much improved achievement, are securing better destinations for pupils when they leave the school. In 2016, the overwhelming majority of pupils who left Year 11 entered employment, education or training routes.
- Leaders have gone to great lengths, working with partners in the trust, to ensure that their progress data is as accurate as it can be. This information and the detailed scrutiny of pupils' workbooks showed that pupils across the ability range in all years of the school are making good progress. Progress in key stage 3 is particularly strong.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved a good GCSE pass in both English and mathematics has risen significantly over the last few years. It is now close to the national average.
- In 2016 at the end of Year 11, the progress of pupils in modern foreign languages and the humanities was above the national average. Inspection activities showed that current pupils across all year groups make good progress too.
- Over time, pupils have not always made appropriate progress in science. Leaders took decisive action. The 2016 examination results were good evidence of the impact of their actions. Pupils in science made progress in line with the national figure for that subject. A detailed analysis of pupils' workbooks and lesson observations showed that current pupils across the school make good progress in science too. The progress of key stage 3 pupils is particularly strong.

School details

Unique reference number	140821
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10031944

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	923
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Steve Chew
Headteachers	Emma Anderson and Dean Webster
Telephone number	0114 255 7331
Website	www.newfield.sheffield.sch.uk/
Email address	enquiries@newfield.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The school is part of the Mercia Learning Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons, with two sessions jointly observed with the headteachers.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both informally and formally, about their learning and safety.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading. They reviewed pupils' work in lessons and scrutinised samples of work in pupils' books.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with three governors and with the chief executive as a representative of the Mercia Learning Trust. Inspectors also held meetings with senior and middle leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school, the school improvement plan and minutes of governing body meetings. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed 78 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents (Parent View). There were no online responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire, but inspectors did take into account the 63 responses on paper provided by the school.

Inspection team

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Steven Beverley	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Rogers	Ofsted Inspector
Melanie Williams	Ofsted Inspector

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