

Newlands Junior School

Address: Braemar Road, Forest Town, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 0LN

Unique reference number (URN): 122453

Inspection report: 14 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), develop the strong learning foundations needed in reading, writing and mathematics to confidently access the wider curriculum and achieve extremely well. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed. Pupils, including pupils with SEND, are keen to talk about their learning and confidently share their knowledge.

Pupils achieve extremely well across the curriculum. Typically, pupils, including those facing challenges in their learning, achieve outcomes above the national average in national tests and make above-average progress. All pupils are extremely well prepared for their next learning steps.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Many pupils are disadvantaged, face barriers to their learning and wellbeing or are known to social care. Leaders have a deep understanding of the needs of pupils and the community and are absolutely determined to ensure that pupils are extremely well prepared for life beyond the school gates. The school's values of pride, respect, kindness and responsibility are the lens through which the personal, social and health education and relationships curriculums have been planned. These curriculums meet all pupils' needs extremely well. Staff make sure they keep up to date, for example to ensure that all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn. They are knowledgeable about the ever-changing nature of the risks online. Leaders have extended learning in this area to involve parents and carers so that the whole school community knows how to keep safe.

Pupils are excited about their education and well prepared for their next steps, including the move to secondary school. They have a secure understanding of different cultures and faiths. They visit a wide range of places of worship and learn about issues linked to fundamental British values. Pupils speak with maturity, empathy and insight about topics such as inequality, discrimination and the importance of fairness, tolerance and democracy.

Leaders offer a wide range of clubs, trips and events that broaden all pupils' experiences and help them to discover new talents and interests. Pupils take great pride in the many roles they hold within the school, such as in the kindness crew, reading committee and school council. All pupils contribute actively to the community, including through regular visits to the local care home. Some pupils are currently campaigning to improve potholes in local roads.

Pastoral care is a significant strength. The pupil wellbeing leads provide tailored, high-quality support so that all pupils, including those facing vulnerabilities, feel safe, valued and ready to learn.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

The school sits at the heart of its community. Leaders know pupils and their families extremely well. They think carefully about the support that pupils need to attend regularly and learn successfully. This includes providing practical help, such as the breakfast club. Leaders also offer a 'soft start' for pupils who need it. As a result, these pupils attend more often.

Leaders now take a more strategic approach to attendance. They analyse information closely to spot patterns and trends. This work is making a positive difference. Overall attendance is in line with national averages and is improving. Disadvantaged pupils attend better than their peers nationally and come to school consistently well.

Staff set high expectations of pupils' conduct and behaviour. Pupils rise to these expectations. They behave impeccably, show a strong love of learning and treat one another with kindness and respect. Well-trained staff support pupils who need extra help to manage their behaviour, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, with skill and care.

Pupils feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination, both in school and online. They said, 'Everyone is welcomed at Newlands!'

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate, strategic view of the curriculum. They have ensured an ambitious curriculum that is well designed and sequenced across all subjects. Pupils' starting points are carefully built upon and there are many planned opportunities for pupils to return to important learning so that they remember it long term. Consequently, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), gain secure knowledge and speak with confidence and enthusiasm about their learning.

Pupils typically receive the teaching they need to secure the right foundations for future learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils in some year groups, however, do not always have enough opportunities to practise skills to address gaps in their writing knowledge, for example in handwriting. Leaders have rightly identified this issue as a priority for development.

Staff are knowledgeable. Pupils particularly appreciate the way in which their teachers provide clear explanations that ensure that they 'know what to do and why'. Staff skilfully adapt learning to meet the needs of pupils who face barriers to their learning. 'In the moment' checks of pupils' learning ensure that teaching is skilfully adjusted to meet need. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, progress through the curriculum very well.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

This is an inclusive school. Many pupils are disadvantaged, known to social care or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders act swiftly and effectively to identify pupils' barriers to learning and to address them, particularly for those with the greatest need. Their partnership with the local infant school is highly effective, ensuring that pupils' needs are recognised early and that targeted support continues seamlessly as pupils move between schools. Pupils with SEND receive expert care and support from well-trained staff. They thrive in the school.

Disadvantaged pupils are well supported. Leaders draw on their strong understanding of research and the local community to ensure that additional funding is used effectively and has a positive impact. All disadvantaged pupils access a wide range of opportunities that broaden their horizons and strengthen their cultural capital. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils facing the greatest vulnerabilities receive the guidance, care and support they need to feel safe and ready to learn.

Leaders work closely with a wide range of external agencies, including the local authority, to ensure that pupils receive the specialist support that they need to succeed. School-based interventions to promote pupils' mental health and wellbeing are particularly effective.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders are experienced and knowledgeable. They absolutely understand the school's context and are determined to ensure that pupils, many of whom are disadvantaged, known to social care or with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve, thrive and become well-rounded, confident and responsible individuals who are well prepared for their futures. Leaders act in the best interest of pupils and purposefully shape the school's provision to give pupils the opportunities that they may not otherwise receive. Parents and many grandparents value the school highly. They fully engage with the school and enjoy the many events and activities that leaders provide.

The quality of governance has recently improved. There is a full compliment of governors. A new chair of governors has been appointed. The support for leaders has improved and there is now much closer oversight of the work of the school. It is early days for this governing body, and some of its work to drive the strategic direction of the school needs to further embed.

Staff, many of whom are long-standing, are absolutely committed to the school. They are extremely proud of the pupils and the community that they serve. They feel well led and supported by leaders.

Staff are subject experts and are well trained. Recently, the school has become part of a local collaboration of schools. This work has been extremely beneficial and has helped leaders to be outward facing, to learn from colleagues and to also share their considerable expertise with others.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils feel proud and fortunate to attend this school. Pupils, including those who face barriers to their learning, enjoy their lessons. They appreciate their teachers for making learning 'such fun'. When pupils face barriers to learning, staff identify these quickly and address them with expertise. Pupils achieve consistently well across the curriculum and are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps.

This is a highly nurturing and loving school community. Staff know pupils and their families extremely well. Pupils are warmly welcomed each day; they attend regularly and are rarely late. Lessons are calm, and learning is never disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils know they can turn to many trusted adults if they need help. They report that bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated. As a result, they feel extremely safe.

The school's values of pride, respect, kindness and responsibility are fully embedded in daily practice. Staff make every effort to ensure that pupils, including those who are most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, become responsible, respectful and active members of the school's community. Pupils are selected daily to serve as 'VIPs', carrying out important classroom tasks. They relish these opportunities. Older pupils act as excellent role models for younger pupils.

Staff are fully committed to broadening pupils' opportunities and experiences. Enrichment activities are embedded throughout the curriculum. All pupils learn about a wide range of faiths and cultures. They visit various places of worship to deepen their understanding. Pupils take part in extensive additional activities, trips and adventures. They participate in sport, explore music and enjoy reading sessions, accompanied by a biscuit. Pupils explain that there are so many exciting things to do in school that they never want to go home.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure continued improvement to their curriculum implementation, particularly in the foundations of writing, to achieve and sustain strong standards of teaching which have a transformational impact on the achievement of all pupils, particularly for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
 - Leaders should continue the work to analyse more closely the attendance of different groups of pupils, to identify priorities more accurately and to continue to improve their attendance so that it returns to levels consistently above the national average for all pupils.
 - Leaders, including governors, should continue the meaningful opportunities to collaborate with local partners. They should develop further their knowledge, insight and expertise so that they conduct their role consistently effectively and so rapidly ensure at least high standards across any of the areas of school where this is not yet the case.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Colin Sawers.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and 4 governors. The lead inspector spoke with a local authority representative.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

There have been no relevant changes since the previous inspection.

Headteacher: Alison Castledine

Lead inspector:

Jayne Ashman, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

George Huthart, Ofsted Inspector

Alison Adair, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

234

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

240

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

47.86%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.43%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

18.80%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	75%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	63%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	82%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	82%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	81%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	85%	72%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	85%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	82%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	75%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	87%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	85%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	69%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	64%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	44%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	77%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	75%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	79%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	77%	60%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	77%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	79%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	77%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	76%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	71%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	79%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	77%	59%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	69%	68%	1 pp
2024/25 (revised)	64%	69%	-5 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	67%	3 pp
2022/23 (final)	73%	66%	6 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	77%	80%	-3 pp
2024/25 (revised)	75%	81%	-6 pp
2023/24 (final)	79%	80%	-1 pp
2022/23 (final)	77%	78%	-1 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	77%	78%	-1 pp
2024/25 (revised)	79%	78%	0 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	78%	-3 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	77%	77%	0 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	76%	80%	-4 pp
2024/25 (revised)	71%	81%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	79%	79%	0 pp
2022/23 (final)	77%	79%	-2 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	4.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.5%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	14.8%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.0%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.5%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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