

Newick House School Profile

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Newick House School

Birchwood Grove Road
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<http://www.newickhouse.co.uk/>

Children's Service Authority:	West Sussex County Council
Age range:	4-16
Number of pupils:	161
Head teacher:	Ms Gillian Perry
Chair of governors:	Mr Chris Chapman

What have been our successes this year?

In 2008-9 Newick House School successfully applied to become a **Specialist School for Communication and Interaction**. This will allow us to build on our expertise in speech and language needs and autism. We plan to raise attainment for our own learners as well as assisting local schools in making good provision for pupils with special needs.

The school continued to have good outcomes and exam results for pupils throughout the ranges of age and the different needs it caters for. Highlights in June 2009 were that 100% of our leavers were successful in external exams, including GCSEs, Youth Award Scheme and Entry Level Certificates, which represented a great achievement for each individual concerned.

The school achieved Full International Award Status in 2008-9. We were also awarded a Gold Democracy Award at Portcullis House, Westminster, for the high participation of our pupils in youth elections. Two pupils were elected as the Burgess Hill representatives for the West Sussex Youth Cabinet.

Pupils enjoyed a wide range of out of school learning opportunities including Dance, Music, Sports and Work Experiences. All Year 10 pupils achieved their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh awards and Junior Sports Leaders Award.

What are we trying to improve?

Newick House School aims to provide the best possible special needs education and support for children and young people in the school, the locality and wider community.

Our three School Improvement Plan priorities are:

1. To ensure all pupils have the best quality school education possible and are well prepared for life beyond school
2. To ensure children, young people and their families benefit from good quality inclusive opportunities
3. To ensure that school administration supports the core purposes of the school, and helps all staff achieve a good work life balance

To further achieve these aims this year we are concentrating on:

- Developing our new role as a Specialist School for Communication and Interaction
- Building on our expertise in using Signs and Symbols throughout the school
- Developing the Creative Curriculum: Art, Music and Dance
- Developing opportunities for all pupils to participate more in outdoor learning, including Gardening
- Embed our recognised good practice in International work
- Partnerships with other schools and support services to support our pupils and the school

How much progress do pupils make?

We look carefully at the progress made by every child in the school and are able to compare their progress with the expected progress of learners with similar needs and attainments. From this we can tell that most pupils make at least the expected progress. For example, in 2008-9, 97% of our pupils made expected or better than expected progress overall. If we find that any pupil is not making as much progress as hoped, we work hard to find out why and discuss this with parents and carers. We aim to ensure we are planning together to help each pupil improve as much as possible.

We help all learners progress in developing personal and social skills, as well as traditional school subjects. This process begins with our youngest pupils (who may need support to sit still long enough to understand instructions) and culminates in our varied and supportive Work Related Learning programme. Learners at Newick House make very good social progress.

Primary pupils achieve well. Analysis of English and Maths assessments shows that although pupils do not all progress at the same rate, many make outstanding progress.

How have our results changed over time?

Results for pupils at all ages in our school reflect the individual needs of the learners in each year group and it is not easy to make direct comparisons of one year group with another. However, the school policy is to enter pupils for tests and exams whenever we can be confident that the experience and outcomes will be positive for them. As a result, the school has been entering more pupils for external exams each year and we have introduced a wider range of examined subjects.

Pupils in Reception did very well in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile in 2008-9. At KS1 and KS2, teacher assessments show pupils make good progress over time. In recent years, few primary aged learners have been working at the National Curriculum level necessary to be entered for SATs. This makes it difficult for their progress to be recognised in national measures.

Secondary aged learners in KS3 and KS4 attain well from their starting points across the range of National Curriculum subjects. In 2008-9, the average exam points score of all leavers was higher than the previous year and all pupils were successful in external exams.

How are we making sure that every child gets teaching to meet their individual needs?

All learners at Newick House have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Every effort is made to offer specialist provision specified for each child. We have different types of class organisation throughout the school, and place pupils according to their learning needs at that time. Individualised planning ensures learning needs are met.

Staff deliver programmes for specific needs to individuals and small groups. These include emotional literacy, language, dyslexia, numeracy and phonics programmes. Some pupils are supported on inclusion programmes in mainstream schools. We work closely with health services, such as physiotherapy and OT, to ensure we can deliver for additional needs.

The school values its close links with the Speech and Language Therapy Service, and employs additional staff to deliver speech and language programmes in school. Class staff ensure that specialist individual therapy programmes are reinforced in the classroom.

Pupils are supported in a range of activities in preparation for life outside the school:

- extensive work experience
- college taster courses
- trips into the local community.

Our lessons, plans and other activities are monitored by senior staff to ensure the quality remains high.

What have pupils told us about the school, and what have we done as a result?

We have a pupil survey each year. In 2008-9 these show that the great majority of pupils feel safe and enjoy school. PE, ICT and 'Golden Time' were the most popular lessons among secondary pupils, and most pupils felt they made good progress and behaved well at school. Pupils tell us they love the cooked school dinners and enjoy our morning 'fruit time', a short session before break for sharing issues and eating healthy food.

Pupils' response forms for their Annual Reviews tell us individual concerns and successes. Where concerns exist they are discussed fully with the pupil and their parent/carer and a plan of action is put in place.

The School Council organises a range of events chosen by the pupils in response to class requests, including talent shows and charity collections. Feedback from School Councillors shows learners value supervised play sessions at breaktimes and are pleased with the Behaviour Reward systems. As a result we arranged more lunchtime activities: Sports Leader led games, football training, and indoor clubs. Some staff volunteer to supervise a small activity club in the morning breaktime. School Councillors also suggested a choice of uniform for KS4 pupils which we have now adopted.

How do we make sure our pupils are safe and well-supported?

Newick House School has developed extensive pastoral support systems. As well as the support from each child's class team (including a teacher and Teaching Assistants), senior staff ensure that safety and guidance are given the highest priority. They are led by a Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion and Community) and the team includes two Pastoral Leaders who are on hand to ensure that all pupils have support to take part in learning, however difficult their circumstances. The team makes sure that we use our range of support as well as possible for each learner.

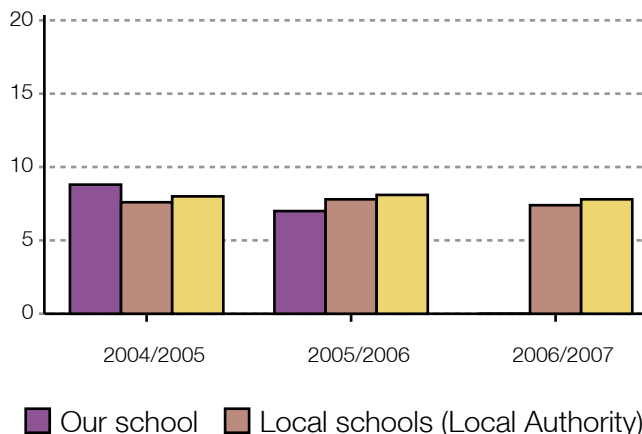
Child Protection procedures and Safer Recruitment processes are fully followed. Governors test and monitor the school's practices and on health and safety procedures regularly. We make every effort to ensure that best practice is followed for educational visits and residential trips. We also have a high number of staff with First Aid qualifications both on site and accompanying any offsite activity.

Support services include:

- Learning Mentors for identified pupils
- sensory support team and staff signers
- staff who support physical needs.

The school hosts termly meetings with other professionals including speech and language therapists and educational psychologists.

How do our absence rates compare with other schools?



This chart shows the percentage of half days missed through authorised and unauthorised absence by all pupils at the school. Information is given for the school, for schools within the local authority and for all schools.

There appears to have been a technical problem in uploading the school's attendance rates for 2006/7 to this website. The 2006-7 figure for the number of half days missed through authorised and unauthorised absence was reported as 6% on other official websites (Raiseonline).

Our level of absence is low for a special school. The school publicises overall attendance rates each term in the Weekly Information Sheet for parents. We have very few unauthorised absences and these are always checked up on by office staff and others as necessary.

The great majority of pupils attend very well. Sometimes there are some very individual reasons for apparent long term absences, which can affect our overall levels of attendance, but generally attendance has remained very good. Newick House attendance rates over the last few years exceed the national special school comparative attendance rate (e.g. Newick House attendance rate in 2008-9 was 93% as compared to the latest national average figure of 89.43% for 2008).

Some pupils at the school have specific reasons for needing authorised absences in term time, and these can include short family holidays which need to be taken during quieter seasons due to the special needs of the child concerned.

What activities and options are available to pupils?

Pupils at Newick House are offered a wide range of activities in school time, relevant to their age group. There are annual whole school events such as Christmas Performances, Sports Days and Activity Weeks. Professional Musicians and Theatre Groups such as KrazyKats are regular visitors.

Many activities are open to all learners and others only to pupils in one year group. Horse Riding and Keyboard lessons are only available to learners in KS3 (aged 11-14) and swimming is offered to Years R-7.

Each year there are many opportunities to participate out of school, including a dance event at The Hawth Theatre. Team events such as the Parallel Youth Games and football tournaments are a highlight. Some pupils are elected to the Burgess Hill School Council.

We run a Breakfast Club, breaktime and lunchtime activities. Indoor activities include Music and Drama club, boardgames or ICT club. There are a range of After School Clubs including

Karate, and a Summer Playscheme.

Most, but not all, classes offer an annual residential activity, tailored to the needs of the learners. For younger pupils these range from camping at school to staying at local centres. Some older pupils have the opportunity to go to the Isle of Wight or further afield.

How are we working with parents and the community?

We aim for parents/carers to be involved in their child's education throughout the year.

This is achieved through:

- consultation when Annual Review Targets are developed.
- holding three Parents' Evenings a year
- home school communication book for all primary and some secondary pupils
- coffee mornings for parents
- support of our Parent and Community Governors
- developing internet and text message methods of keeping in touch with families

Parents and carers are consulted for their views on aspects of school life. Surveys on how Parents Evenings are organised and on school reports showed a very high level of satisfaction.

Our fundraising group, 'The Friends of Newick House', organises a range of events, some of which offer direct support to parents. These include information swaps to enable parents and carers with similar concerns to gain from each other.

We want the school to contribute to, as well as benefit from, its local and wider community. Learners develop links with local care homes and we invite the elderly residents to our annual Harvest Festival.

We particularly value the links we have with supportive local employers who offer work and community experience opportunities to our older pupils.

What do our pupils do after leaving this school?

We had 16 leavers in 2009, and 15 of them went on to Further Education. The courses chosen by our students include those designed for young people with learning disabilities and also a range of mainstream vocational courses.

Of the 2009 leavers, 11 are now attending Central Sussex College. 7 on the Extended Education Course, one on the Vocational Skills Course and three others are specialising in chosen areas: Motor Vehicle Maintenance, Childcare and Food Preparation and Cookery. Some pupils with particular needs progress to specialist schools or units including Court Meadow School or QE2 School's Independence Units. Other pupils have chosen to attend specialist colleges and these included NYCPE (Lingfield) in the last year. One leaver is now at agricultural college taking the Land Based Agriculture course at Brinsbury.

We keep in touch with our leavers and are proud of their varied achievements. Leavers from previous years continue to visit the school.

In the last four years pupils who directly entered employment continue to work in a range of vocational areas including retail, catering, care, agriculture and manufacturing. Four current students have worked alongside successful ex pupils in recent work experience placements.

Ofsted's view of our school

Newick House is a good and improving school that has some excellent features. It enjoys the support of the very large majority of its parents and it has forged excellent links with partners such as local schools and colleges. Senior staff provide strong leadership and management. They are led very well by the headteacher and ably supported by middle managers. The team has brought about good improvement since the last inspection because it has taken action based on its findings from effective self-evaluation. For instance, they responded to the challenge of an increasing number of pupils with autism by supporting professional development so that staff were better equipped to meet the needs of these pupils. Even greater improvement has been hindered by the very significant time that the headteacher has spent in negotiation with the local authority about the possible reorganisation of its provision for pupils with learning difficulties. This has meant that senior leaders have not been able to monitor all aspects of the school's work as effectively as they would have wished.

The school's main aim is 'to prepare its pupils for as much independence as possible at school and in adult life'. It achieves this successfully. Pupils make excellent strides in their personal development. They become more confident and better equipped to deal with the unexpected. They love to go to school and enjoy everything that it has to offer. The pupils receive an outstanding level of care, guidance and support. This includes the effective use of different communication approaches in individual lessons to support pupils' learning although there is less consistent use of these different approaches across the school in its day-to-day work.

The pupils' standard of work is exceptionally low in national terms because of their learning difficulties. However, they all make good progress during their time in the school, including the very few children in the Foundation Stage. This is because teaching and learning are good even though on a few occasions lesson planning is not sufficiently focused on the subject knowledge that pupils are expected to learn. The pupils receive a good range of learning opportunities and older pupils follow a particularly good curriculum with a strong focus on work-related learning. However, the overall quality of the curriculum is adversely affected by the accommodation. The pupils benefit from a good range of off-site visits, but there are limited extra-curricular opportunities during the school day, such as at lunchtime for younger pupils.

Date of last inspection: 08-Jun-2007

Ofsted graded our school as good

Inspectors made judgements on a scale: outstanding (grade 1); good (2); satisfactory (3); inadequate (4).



[View the Ofsted page for Newick House School](#)

What have we done in response to Ofsted?

Lesson Planning across the school is being monitored even more carefully by senior staff to ensure that it is always focussed on the subject content that pupils need to learn. The school has trialled different methods of individual planning for every child, making sure that each pupil's targets for the next stage in learning are the focus in every lesson.

Staff receive weekly training in signing to ensure we use this more consistently. We have sent a member of staff to become a Makaton Instructor and she now teaches signing to staff, parents, Governors and partner school staff. The staff increasingly use signing throughout the age range and symbols are also used more consistently. Every class has a visual timetable. Our secondary pupils enjoy signing in the Christmas Play.

We have increased the opportunities for Clubs by starting a Breakfast Club. We are able to signpost our pupils to a wide range of other clubs in the local area.

We continue to do our best to work within the schools buildings we have. The school links with other providers to ensure that our pupils get the best access to good facilities, away from the school if necessary. For example, in PE we take most pupils to our local Leisure Centre for swimming and games.

More Information

If you would like more information about school policies, including our policies on special educational needs and disability, admissions, finance, school food and our complaints procedure, please contact us:

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