



Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA)

Reassessment Report

School name:	Newfield
School address and postcode:	Old Bank Lane, Blackburn, BB1 2PW
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School website:	www.newfield.org.uk
Head teacher:	Rachel Kay
Award coordinator:	Jenny Riley
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Date of reassessment:	23/06/2023

Commentary on the mini-portfolio of evidence:

A portfolio of evidence was uploaded to the Awardplace portal prior to the visit. A paper copy was also given on the day. An abundance of evidence was examined in relation to the KPI targets for reassessment. Evidence included survey analysis, newsletters, meeting minutes, photographs, attendance registers, links to the website, leaflets, emails, parent communications via the apps used and more. Staff and families clearly refer to the school as the 'Newfield family'. All students are treated as individuals with different starting points. A lot of families have had negative experiences with education and due to most students being transported to the school there is a barrier to daily 'playground' contact with parents and families. The school have an overall vision to develop into a hub for the community and are looking at extending the use of the premises over the holiday periods as well. The school offer a siblings group over the holidays in order to further build their relationships with families and key members of staff are dedicated to family liaison. The LPPA award provides opportunity for reflection on current and future work with the appointment of two Wellbeing Family Co-Ordinators, regular parent coffee mornings, parent workshops, training courses and events. Events for families include annual transition events with a wide range of social care, health, education, finance, and respite providers. School staff will travel to students' homes to help families with transitional work around bereavement or tribunal issues and there is a resource library for parents with support on conditions, sleep issues, behaviours, and other concerns. From a health perspective, nurses will provide transition and induction workshops and visits. There is a large, predominant section allocated for parents on the website that includes a blog section. Speech and language drop-in sessions, PIP, Kooth and visual impairment workshops have been implemented to further support families. The school provides interpretation services and encourages families to attend art exhibitions, prom, and celebrations of achievement. Wellbeing family co-ordinators work

year-round, including holidays. School provides support to parents through the Newfield Free Food Larder and pupils benefit from a fortnightly visit with a therapy dog.

Commentary on the tour of the school:

A tour of the school was given, led by a group of students from different areas of the school in a range of ages and year groups. There are multiple dedicated parent information areas around the building including main reception that provide leaflets and displays sourcing support and guidance. Fundraising displays are clear and demonstrate the school's links to the community. The Remembrance tree is central with the names of all staff, pupils and families that have been lost, allowing students to understand the meaning. Signage around the school appears in text, visuals and sign language imagery. Accessible, light areas and corridors are welcoming and well kept. Displays showcase achievement, present information and explain themes such as Eco Warriors. Sensory classrooms and meeting halls were seen alongside a Move lesson and a 4D room session. The on-site café allows pupils to support and develop their skills, ICT booths were accessible and well positioned. Areas observed included wheelchair lifts next to staircases, multiple classrooms and meeting spaces, an outdoor sensory garden and movement track, an outdoor education area and an accessible playground.

Commentary on discussions with stakeholders:

A range of staff discussed different aspects of their role. Admin staff spoke about how new starters receive an initial admission pack with parent information, menus, family wellbeing support, Parentmail sign up instructions, Evidence for Learning platform details and more. There are a number of methods of communication in place including, Class Dojo, videos and messages can be sent home to evidence progress, email and phone contact is also widely used daily. Home visits from teachers and nurses if needed are part of the admission process. There is an extensive class transition process followed on admission to the school. Staff will visit the individual's current setting as well as the home in order to ensure perspectives from all environments are gathered. Bespoke transition is promoted well with all individual needs taken into account and a family centred process is followed effectively. All staff develop a relationship with parents and families in order to expand the support network around the individual. Covid strengthened relationships with parents as the setting remained open and staff made daily welfare checks.

A discussion was held with one of the two Family Wellbeing Co-Ordinators who described a 'family feel' to the staff, student and family relationships. Successful coffee mornings have led to a two-year action plan for parental engagement. Contact is bespoke to the family needs and wishes which enables a trusting relationship to form, particularly with families who have had negative experiences in school. Engagement starts with large informal coffee mornings, which are then splintered into smaller groups linked by theme and need such as Section 20 information, and behaviour management strategies. Dads and Lads sessions have been extremely popular, and school are looking to expand these. Andy's Man Club came to facilitate workshop sessions and was very well received. Parents have asked for more of these sessions. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education in order to incorporate strategies at home. A MOVE session festival for parents demonstrated physical activities to support mobility that can be incorporated at home in order to effectively implement cross curricular intervention and wellbeing. Sensory stay and play sessions and sensory story development workshops had a high uptake from families. The demographic of the school is varied due to the nature of the needs of the students, so school need to create opportunities for parental engagement. Most students are transported to school, so there

is no morning or afternoon pick up opportunities for parents and staff. Reducing the stigma around education and specialist settings is a priority as is gaining trust with families. Staff support families at meetings external to school. A lot of parents are distrusting of services at the start and a lot of work is done to reverse this experiential impact. School breakfast programs and food parcels are provided to families. Parents have become trusting enough to ask staff for help. All staff are experienced in signposting parents to other areas of support. School helped families with neighbour issues at home by providing translated information in the neighbour's native language to enable them to understand the individual's needs. Multiple languages are supported with interpretation services, engaging with the parent groups has supported families to improve their English skills. English lessons did not have a great uptake and so informal groups seem to be preferred. The parent governor is very involved in all sessions and groups. Admin hold a spreadsheet of translating needs for each family to ensure communication can be met as much as possible. Family Wellbeing Co-Ordinators present to governors in order to keep them updated with relevant information. Parents ask to remain in contact with the school even when students have moved on. Cygnet courses are provided to parents to support with diagnosis and conditions.

A large number of parents requested to meet on the day - ten families confirmed attendance. Through discussion the following information was gathered: 'This is an amazing school', 'every day we get a detailed update, school checks in during the holidays, and a lot of support was provided during lockdown', 'we know our child is safe here', 'school really understand our child', 'kids feel safe and are happy', 'school make it easy for us to understand our children's needs which really helps us at home.' 'Strategies are shared, and we are able to use these at home.' 'Our children love their routines and actively seek to attend school.' 'Coffee mornings are helpful and courses for behaviours have been really useful.' 'School have facilitated any support from external agencies and work according to our needs.' 'School make adaptations in the best interests of the students.' 'I have noticed that skills from schools are transferred to home because strategies are repeated to support students to remember.' One parent decided to work here due to the atmosphere as school are very supportive of parents, 'I will never forget the support from the staff' 'I had so many reservations of specialist provision- I was the one struggling to accept it, school let me see how I wasn't the only one.' 'School are very supportive to both parents equally, not just mums, and I really appreciate it.' 'School are very responsive and quick to support.' 'I am made to feel like a normal parent and my concerns are valid.' 'Grandparents are well supported and included.' 'School supported to break the news of sudden bereavement and came straight to the house. She refuses to take a day off school.' 'School have provided as much as possible to facilitate transition.' 'We couldn't have managed without the support'. 'I can't believe that any other school could support as much as these do'. School provides opportunities to socialise with other parents and sharing experiences helps. 'School are our first point of call for any support.' 'When they leave, they miss it so much'. 'Holidays are a struggle because they want to be in school.' 'The children's happiness shows how much they get from the school and how well they do to support them. Before this school, we didn't have hardly any support and we had to fight for everything.' 'We came here and haven't looked back since'. 'This school provides the support, not just on paper but you can see the impact.' 'School are always there'. Parents are confident to express their concerns and are eager to attend the school whenever possible. 'School is a lifeline to me' 'I don't think the teachers get enough praise, the amount of care and attention they give my child, and my family makes them heroes to us.' There is no exclusion here. 'Ann- Marie will fight for us- like a dog with a bone in the best way'. 'Resilience is a culture here'. 'The staff here are like gods to us, and the teachers treat them as their own children'. 'They are passionate about the job; it is a vocation to them.' 'School have taught me that I don't have to feel guilty'. 'School are the only people I can talk to' 'Newfield school is not just a school- it is a family within a home'. 'School have taught me so much - we are involved in everything.'

Students led a tour of the site, including both schools- one student said, 'if there is a problem school contact my parents.' Non-verbal and verbal students joined the tour and were all excited and confident to show their favourite parts of the school.

The deputy headteacher discussed how induction is seen as the very first contact with individuals and families and needs to be positive. Leadership is constantly developing the process the process of induction and bespoke transition. School have surveyed parents' experiences of induction and have taken feedback onboard. Feedback from parents demonstrates an appreciation of the care and thought given to transitions. Individualised approaches are key to ensuring a smooth and effective process. There is a detailed information gathering process prior to admission incorporating home and current setting observations as well as transition visits. Visuals and social stories are used to provide concrete frames of references. Communication apps involve all health and care professionals as well as teachers which ensures communication is timely and accurate. Responses to offered courses is very high. Courses that are run by teaching staff allow the material to be personalised. This opens up communication within the sessions. Parents have accessed training in PECS, Cygnet, behaviour, sign language and more.

Strengths identified during reassessment:

Transition plans are robust, clear and personalised to pupils and families utilising a person-centred approach.
Signposting and support are consistent and fluid, available in multiple formats and areas.
Encouraging confidence of the students is a key priority and this was demonstrated during the tour.

Impact:

By ensuring transition plans are bespoke and centred around the best interests of the individual, the school is effectively promoting a positive admission process. Parents and families are made to feel involved and part of the process which then encourages them to engage with other services.

Multiple parent areas were seen around the school- not just the front reception. This presents the idea that parents are welcome in all areas of the school and are part of the community.

By encouraging the student's self- confidence, the school are actively promoting a sense of self-worth and achievement. Pupils feel part of the school community and are more open to developing new skills and taking positive risks.

Areas for development:

Increasing activities for dads and pupils is a key area for development. Dad and Lads club was very well received and more activities have been requested.

Forming a PTFA will enable school to gather more feedback from parents and encourage parents to become actively involved in decisions regarding the school.

Parents are requesting holiday clubs for pupils- the school is currently assessing the use of the premises outside of term time.



Verifier recommendation:

It was lovely to experience the inclusive and welcoming atmosphere at this setting. Pupils, parents and staff were eager to show their school to visitors, fostering a secure and warm family setting. Expectations of students is high, and families are strongly encouraged to actively participate in school life. It is my recommendation that the school has continued their journey well and has met the criteria during reassessment for the Leading Parent Partnership award.

Head teacher comments:

This report validates the work we pride ourselves on and will continue to focus on strengthening the idea of school as a community hub.

Being the parent of a child with additional needs is a daunting and often lonely task so we are committed to do whatever is needed to support and empower our parents and carers.

This way we are motivated to engage, improve and create opportunities with our families. This is possible because of the relentless and determined efforts of the family wellbeing support team and the wider team in school.

It will be full steam ahead next year to get everyone even more engaged in community events to reinforce school as a safe haven or a home away from home when it is most needed.

Rachel Kay

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