

# Northwick Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 131346          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Essex           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 360259          |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 23–24 June 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Sue Rogers      |

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Foundation                               |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                                     |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 460                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Penny Culloty                            |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Emma Lane                                |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 5 December 2007                          |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Third Avenue<br>Canvey Island<br>SS8 9SU |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01268 684554                             |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01268 510783                             |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | admin@northwickpark.essex.sch.uk         |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 3–11            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 23–24 June 2011 |
| <b>Inspection number</b> | 360259          |

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|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Registered Childcare provision</b>                                   | EY289743 Busy Bears      |
| <b>Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision</b> | 52                       |
| <b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>        | Not previously inspected |

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|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 3–11            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 23–24 June 2011 |
| <b>Inspection number</b> | 360259          |

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who made lesson observations in 22 lessons, seeing 17 teachers altogether. In addition, inspectors visited each class several times to scrutinise planning, talk to pupils and look at their work. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and school leaders. Inspectors also looked at school documentation such as safeguarding records, monitoring files and the school development plan. They met some parents and carers at the school gate and analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff, as well as 186 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent has attainment at the end of Year 6 improved?
- Is progress being accelerated so that pupils make consistently good or better progress in both English and mathematics?
- Are target setting and the use of assessment effective enough to improve attainment by the more able, especially in English?

## Information about the school

Northwick Park is a large primary and nursery school. The Nursery classes admit children in the year before they are eligible to attend school. The school provides full wrap-around care in the form of the Busy Bears Club which includes breakfast and after-school clubs and a holiday club, registered day-care for children aged two or above and a pre-school that caters for children aged three and upwards, before they are old enough to enter the Nursery. In addition, there is a children's centre on site which is separately managed. The school serves a largely White British population. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is double the national average. About a quarter of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the majority of whom have moderate learning difficulties or emotional problems. This is slightly above the national average. A higher than average number of pupils begin or leave school at other than the normal times.

The school currently holds the following validity awards: The Healthy Schools Award, Artsmark Gold, The Activemark, The Sportsmark International Intermediate Award and The Growing Our Own Leaders kitemark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Northwick Park is now an outstanding school. It is exemplary in that leaders go to remarkable lengths to ensure that children get the very best possible start to their education from a very early age. The school is open 51 weeks of the year. Really excellent wrap-around care and continuous attention to providing good teaching ensure that all groups of pupils make outstanding progress. The questionnaires wholeheartedly endorsed inspectors' views, being extremely positive in all areas. As one parent wrote: 'This is a fantastic school with a friendly and welcoming environment. An A\* school!'

Pupils achieve well because their needs are meticulously analysed through progress tracking and day-to-day assessment in the classroom. A large range of interventions to help pupils catch up are accessible and are utilised effectively as necessary, often immediately after the lesson. As a result, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 most pupils are now attaining at the levels expected for their age in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is increasing in both subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make outstanding progress and, where they are behind with their work, often close the gap so that they achieve as well as others.

Pupils' progress has improved rapidly over recent years because of a concerted effort to ensure that relationships throughout the school are excellent. Behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved tremendously, such that they are now outstanding and pupils feel exceptionally safe. Pupils are fully involved in the life of the school and are influential in shaping its future. Learners thrive in this environment. Pupils, parents and carers agree that school is a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Senior leaders have determinedly set about improving teaching, building a very experienced and competent staff team. The teaching is characterised by high expectations, good questioning, clear explanations and good subject knowledge. It is underpinned by an outstanding curriculum tailored to meet the needs of all and to engage learners through exciting and relevant activities. Most teachers are also good at making sure that pupils are very clear about how they are getting on and exactly what they have to do to improve. However, this is not consistently reinforced in teachers' marking. Expectations relating to standards of presentation in books are not always as high as expectations in terms of what pupils will learn.

The hands-on approach adopted by senior leaders has instilled confidence in parents and carers. For example, one parent commented, 'I am very happy that the head always deals with any matter personally. I always find her very approachable and efficient.' Consequently, partnerships with parents and carers are excellent. Leaders have worked very purposefully; continually and accurately assessing strengths and areas for development and achieving very creditable improvements in pupils' personal development

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and in their academic learning. The school's capacity for continued improvement is, therefore, outstanding.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in English and mathematics, by ensuring that the teaching in every lesson is good or better through:
  - improving marking so that it gives pupils enough information for them to know specifically what they have to do to succeed when working independently
  - making sure that consistently high standards are set for presentation in pupils' books.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Children enter the school in the day-care, pre-school and nursery phases with skills and knowledge that are below those typically expected. Their language skills are particularly weak, as are their knowledge and understanding of the world. Although children make excellent progress because of outstanding provision, they are generally still well behind in their skills when they enter the Reception class. Outstanding progress continues throughout the school. Consequently, attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved steadily over the last three years. More-able pupils still do slightly less well in English than in mathematics, but this is because starting points in English are so low. Lessons and pupils' books confirm that learning is sometimes outstanding and usually at least good in both these subjects. Teachers are rightly continuing to target speaking skills, through excellent questioning, to drive up attainment in English still further. Newer pupils expressed their gratitude for the way in which they had been settled in and supported in their learning. One new boy in Year 6 explained enthusiastically how he had been helped to improve his mathematics through individual tuition and that he now thought he would get a Level 5 as a result.

Pupils who have difficulties in learning language were seen participating in a variety of carefully planned groups, which effectively supported them in catching up. Vulnerable pupils and those with other special educational needs make equally outstanding progress because of well-targeted help. Pupils were seen collaborating successfully and concentrating exceptionally hard. They were polite and delightful to talk to and were working increasingly well independently. Teachers work very successfully to motivate and support pupils. These efforts are really appreciated, with pupils commonly saying, 'School is phenomenal,' or 'It's fantastic.'

Pupils have good knowledge about healthy lifestyles, although they occasionally struggle to apply this. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe, especially in regard to using the internet. They thoroughly enjoy helping to promote the school and the Canvey Island community. Pupils have excellent social skills and a very strong understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The school is rapidly developing pupils' understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity. Consequently, pupils show a sensitive interest in and outstanding tolerance for each other and a growing awareness of their place in the world.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress  | 1        |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress                      | 1        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>1</b> |

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

The school's care, guidance and support for pupils lie at the heart of its success. Excellent relationships underpin all that it does and all aspects of the wrap-around care are excellent. Pupils' personal development is especially well provided for. Children's needs are identified and addressed from a very early age and partnerships with parents and carers are developed and consolidated straight away. Pupils are very happy and very purposefully engaged at the before- and after-school clubs. Learners rightly praise the work of the school counsellor in making sure that they always have someone to talk to if they have a problem. There is excellent communication between staff to ensure that pupils cope with all aspects of school and especially transition through the different phases of their education. Outstanding collaboration through a multi-agency approach means that vulnerable pupils are well supported. Attendance has improved to just below average and the percentage of persistent absentees considerably reduced because of good school procedures, such as checking on reasons for absence very quickly.

Teaching continues to improve because leaders' high expectations extend throughout the school and because all the staff are reflective and continuously striving to get better. About a third of lessons seen were outstanding, with teachers at times demonstrating exemplary practice in helping pupils to evaluate what they have done and identifying areas for improvement. Support staff are often proactive in providing additional support straightaway to address misconceptions. Work is very carefully tailored to meet the needs

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of all individuals. This is why those with special educational needs or who are new to the school succeed. Where teaching is weaker, this is because teachers are overly instructive, reducing opportunities for independence and developing thinking. Marking does not always reflect the careful evaluative work done in lessons or draw sufficient attention to the quality of the pupils' handwriting and presentation.

Teachers plan exceptionally well with great attention to detail, making sure that lessons are as interesting and inclusive as possible and that the required curriculum is covered. Cross-curricular themes provide opportunities to teach basic skills in other subjects and for pupils to understand how their learning relates to their everyday life and to their future. Lessons are practical, ensuring that learning is motivating and skills are developed. There is a wide range of enrichment activities, such as an Egyptian Day and a visit to Duxford War Museum. Some unusual aspects are included, such as archery and philosophy, which cater for all interests and allow all to succeed.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 2        |
| <b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>1</b> |

## How effective are leadership and management?

Excellent direction by the headteacher combined with outstanding leadership at all levels and very cohesive teamwork has driven successful improvement. There is an increasing proportion of exceptional teaching and increased access to high-quality wrap-around care. Consequently, standards have risen. School leaders are impressive in their confidence that things will improve even more and in their zeal to do the best that they possibly can for all their pupils. Subject leaders have been well trained and now shoulder a considerable amount of the monitoring work. Monitoring itself is robust, makes good use of assessment information and is used to support very regular evaluation of the school action plans.

The governing body is effective in its ability to challenge and support the school. Governors and school leaders have ensured that the safeguarding of pupils is good, with the consequence that pupils feel exceptionally safe and parents and carers are very confident in the school's ability to care for them. They have also ensured that all within the school community have equal opportunities to succeed and that there is no discrimination. Community cohesion is strong within the school, but is not yet fully developed in terms of local and national links for the pupils. However, partnerships to support learning in the local community are excellent, contributing most notably to pupils' good progress in music and sport.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>1</b> |

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The school's extended provision is highly effective in helping children to get off to the best possible start in their education. The Busy Bears registered day-care and pre-school both target language and social skills immediately to address the children's most obvious weaknesses. The day-care has a purposeful and relaxed atmosphere in which adults interact extremely well with parents and carers and children. The pre-school provides an exemplary range of activities in a vibrant learning environment. Adults in both use questioning extremely effectively and challenge children constantly, so that they improve their skills rapidly. Great attention is paid to pupils' safety and physical comfort and there is good hygiene training; it complies fully with the requirements for registration.

The Nursery and Reception classes maintain the very supportive learning atmosphere and adults act as excellent role models. The focus on behaviour is especially good, autonomy is encouraged and children are, therefore, very engaged in their learning and extremely enthusiastic. Outstanding leadership ensures the use of high-quality assessment that informs planning which is both meticulous and inspired by children's interests. As a result, staff work purposefully and well to meet the needs of all children, and children in all phases make excellent progress in every area of the early years' curriculum. However, attainment on entry to Year 1 is still below national expectations as the children's starting points are very low.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>1</b> |
| Taking into account:   |          |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage                          | 2        |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage                       | 1        |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1        |

## Views of parents and carers

A higher than average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded shared the inspectors' positive views of the school. There were a variety of affirmative written comments and there were very few disagreements with any of the statements in the questionnaire. Although all comments were carefully considered there was no consistent theme and inspectors could find no evidence during this inspection to support any particular concern.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Northwick Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 186 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 460 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 120            | 65 | 62    | 33 | 2        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 123            | 66 | 58    | 31 | 3        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress  | 117            | 63 | 65    | 35 | 4        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 120            | 65 | 65    | 35 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 127            | 68 | 59    | 32 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 114            | 61 | 71    | 38 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 101            | 54 | 81    | 44 | 3        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 101            | 54 | 78    | 42 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 113            | 61 | 72    | 39 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 88             | 47 | 89    | 48 | 6        | 3 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 92             | 49 | 80    | 43 | 10       | 5 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 121            | 65 | 61    | 33 | 2        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 132            | 71 | 52    | 28 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.  |
| Grade 2 | Good         | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.  |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.  |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

### Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 46  | 48   | 6            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 6   | 47   | 40           | 7          |
| Secondary schools    | 12  | 39   | 38           | 11         |
| Sixth forms          | 13  | 42   | 41           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 28  | 49   | 19           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 14  | 45   | 31           | 10         |
| All schools          | 10  | 46   | 37           | 7          |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.   |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.  |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.  |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.  |
| Learning:                  | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.  |
| Overall effectiveness:     | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul> |
| Progress:                  | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.   |

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



27 June 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Northwick Park Primary School, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU**

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school to carry out our inspection. Thank you also to those of you who filled in questionnaires and special thanks to those of you who gave up time to talk to us. We thought that you were delightful to talk to. We were very impressed with your good manners and with your enthusiasm for school.

We agree that yours is an excellent school and you make outstanding progress in your lessons. Your headteacher and all the other staff have done very well, with your help, to keep on improving your school for you. You get off to a really good start because of all the different ways in which the school helps to educate you when you are very young. School leaders also do very well to provide you with clubs and education through the whole school year. As a result, most of you now get the expected results in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6, even if you did not know very much when you started school. You are extremely well cared for and were happy to tell us that you always feel safe and have someone to talk to if there is a problem. One of the big improvements in your school has been your behaviour. You all look after each other very well and try very hard in your lessons.

You told us that you think teachers are good at providing exciting lessons and making sure that you understand everything that you are doing. We agree and we think that your teachers and support staff do a good job. However, we are asking them to try to improve the standard of your work even further, through improving teaching so that it is all good or really good, by:

- making sure that marking gives you enough information for you to know exactly what you have to do to improve when working independently
- making sure that consistently high standards are set for presentation in your books.

You can do your bit to help Northwick Park get even better by making sure that you present your work well and write as neatly as you can.

Yours sincerely

Sue Rogers

Lead inspector

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