

Normand Croft Community School for Early Years and Primary Education

Bramber Road, London W14 9PA

Inspection dates

10–11 November 2016 and 15 December 2016

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Requires improvement |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors have not kept up to date with the latest safeguarding requirements. They have been complacent in assuming that safeguarding practice in the school continued to be good following the last inspection. They have been remiss in not checking routinely that school leaders have fulfilled their responsibilities to safeguard children.
- Safeguarding is now effective because, day to day, staff have a sound awareness of how to look after pupils' safety and how to respond to emergencies and emerging risks.
- However, in recent months, the quality of leaders' written records about safeguarding has not been of a consistently high standard.
- Senior leaders have been too slow at keeping all staff up to date on the latest guidance on safeguarding. Staff have now received the necessary training. The acting headteacher has also ensured written records are robust.
- Most-able pupils do not make quick progress because they are not given more challenging work when they are ready for it.
- Improvements in the quality of writing have been slow overall because there are not enough opportunities to develop writing skills in all subjects across the school.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to express and develop their own ideas.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are safe in this school. The school reacts quickly to deal with any risks to ensure that pupils remain safe. Staff are vigilant about child safety.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Most pupils now make good progress in reading and mathematics.
- Most pupils behave well and work hard.
- Leaders provide equal opportunities for all pupils to learn and develop. Consequently, most pupils make good progress.
- Most children in the early years make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teachers explain ideas and activities clearly and accurately. As a result, most pupils start work quickly and keep working well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Governors must give the highest priority to safeguarding pupils, by:
 - ensuring that they are knowledgeable about the latest safeguarding requirements
 - holding school leaders to account from a well-informed background to check that safeguarding policy and practice across the school is consistently fit for purpose.
- School leaders, including governors, must make sure that:
 - updates to guidance about keeping children safe are received and understood promptly by all staff
 - all points from discussions and actions taken relating to the safety of children are recorded thoroughly and efficiently.
- School leaders should further improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils:
 - are given earlier opportunities to attempt more difficult work
 - have more opportunities to develop the quality of their writing across a wider range of subjects.
 - develop the skills of managing their own learning alongside their reliance on teachers.

An external review of governance should be carried out in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders have helped all staff to understand the guidance about keeping children safe, but the information has not been provided promptly enough by leaders. Although leaders provided this in stages to ensure that it was fully understood, their approach was too slow.
- The new acting headteacher has recently worked swiftly and with appropriate urgency to gain an accurate view of strengths with regard to safeguarding procedures and areas that needed to be better. She recognises that while pupils' safety has not been at risk, and appropriate actions have been taken to support and protect them, leaders' written communications about safeguarding have, in recent months, not been maintained efficiently. It is clear that she has addressed temporary shortfalls with urgency. She ensures that concerns about pupils are acted upon swiftly and that leaders now note actions consistently and follow them up appropriately. The acting headteacher involves outside agencies as necessary and works closely with the local authority to make sure that she receives advice when needed.
- The acting headteacher has worked swiftly to provide essential professional development for other leaders so that specific lines of responsibility are clear.
- In other respects, this school has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are making better progress throughout the school. Leaders have identified further priorities and these are supported by useful action plans which are ready for implementation.
- The quality of teaching has improved despite some instability in staffing. Teachers learn from more experienced colleagues, external experts and also from visits to other schools. Staff have used their training to deepen their subject knowledge, structure their lessons more carefully, improve the quality of their questioning and raise their expectations of pupils' capabilities.
- Assessment information is accurate because teachers have checked their judgements with other schools and received specific training on how to judge pupils' work. This helps teachers plan to improve pupils' understanding more carefully.
- Senior leaders frequently check the quality of teaching within the school. These checks are wide-ranging and systematic. The school has an increasing focus upon pupils' progress when judging the quality of teaching.
- The local authority provided prompt support after the previous inspection. They carried out school reviews and developed the skills of senior leaders and governors related to school improvement. More recently, they have reduced their support in response to improvements in pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school promotes equal opportunities for all pupils well. Leaders have taken effective action to greatly reduce, and sometimes remove, gaps between how well different groups of pupils learn. Teachers identify early those children who need extra help to keep up with their peers and provide well-planned support. Differences between how well groups of pupils learn, including those from different minority ethnic

groups and boys and girls, have diminished in most year groups, apart from most-able pupils across the school.

- Pupil premium funding is used to provide a range of effective interventions. One-to-one and small-group teaching, as well as parental support, ensure that most pupils who are falling behind are helped to catch up. About a third of this funding also pays for more experienced teachers to work with less experienced teachers. This is to help improve teacher skills across the school to reach the level of the best teachers. Early feedback from teachers indicates that they are benefiting from this joint working.
- Differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others are diminishing by the end of Year 2 and have mainly disappeared by the end of Year 6. Most-able disadvantaged pupils do not yet achieve well enough.
- Leaders regularly adjust teaching plans to improve how well pupils learn. This has helped bring about improvements in English and mathematics and is now bringing about improvements in the wider range of subjects.
- Additional primary school sport funding is used well to provide more sporting activities for pupils. Participation rates in sports clubs have increased every year for pupils with different needs and abilities. Sports coaches are used effectively to provide high-quality instruction and contribute to developing staff skills in the teaching of physical education. Combined with other extra clubs and activities, such as football, pupils benefit from wide-ranging opportunities to enjoy learning at school.
- The school's personal, social, health and economic education programme is used to help pupils learn about key events in our lives such as climate change and sustainability. Pupils learn about the importance of letting people live differently, as long as we all help each other stay safe and well. Pupils also recognise that they have a responsibility for their own well-being, the comfort of others and the condition of our environment. This includes their school and the natural world outside.
- The school's attention to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education has helped create a harmonious school community. Staff model the school values and pupils respect individual freedoms as well as community responsibility. For example, it was Armistice Day during the inspection. Pupils understood the symbolism of wearing poppies and the importance of reflection. One pupil said, 'You don't have to wear a poppy. You can just think about it inside if you want to.' Pupils learn about different faiths, countries and cultures through visitors, trips outside their locality and projects.

Governance of the school

- Governors work through a structure of committees focusing upon key aspects of the work of the school, including finance, buildings, and teaching and learning. However, they have not held senior leaders sufficiently accountable for the quality of safe practices within the school.
- The governing body has not, over time, ensured that all staff recognise their collective and individual duties to safeguard pupils, or kept up to date on the latest safeguarding requirements. Governors have been too reliant on the headteacher and local authority to keep informed about safeguarding matters.

- However, governors now carry out visits to the school with a focus on safeguarding. They have attended training to ensure that they are better-placed to hold senior leaders to account for the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school. The new acting headteacher has produced a helpful checklist of actions which will support this developing area of the governors' work, including, for example, governors attending safer recruitment training.
- Governors know how well additional support benefits pupils. They have a clear strategy for the spending of the pupil premium and the sports funding, and have helped ensure that differences in rates of progress between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally have mainly disappeared.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Day to day, leaders act swiftly and carefully to ensure the safety of children. They make sure that safety issues are discussed regularly throughout the school so that teachers can share their views of how well the school is keeping children safe.
- Senior leaders have recently provided all staff with further training so that everyone working in the school is now clear on their responsibilities and what to do if they have any concerns about pupils.
- Senior leaders make sure that they carry out safety checks before recruiting staff. The single central record is maintained well with up-to-date and accurate information. Staff have been trained to protect pupils from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Links with external partners provide additional support and advice to keep children safe from exploitation and harm. The acting headteacher has recently improved systems so that written communications regarding any safeguarding matters are maintained efficiently.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils start activities in lessons promptly because of their teachers' high expectations and clear explanations. Teachers have established routines so that pupils persevere if they find work difficult. Pupils say that if they are stuck they try harder themselves, ask their friends and the teachers are also always ready to help.
- School leaders have updated their assessment systems to reflect national changes. They collect and analyse accurate information about how well pupils are learning. Teachers increasingly use this information to adjust their teaching for the needs of different pupils. For example, sometimes pupils are given different activities or extra support. Pupils also make good use of specific feedback to correct their misconceptions or fill gaps in their learning.
- School leaders are aware that pupils need more opportunities to practise writing across different subjects across the curriculum and have already started to bring about improvements in writing. This is beginning to have an impact on standards.
- Teachers insist upon pupils' accurate use of English, introducing key vocabulary early

so that pupils can practise accurate expression. Teachers ask interesting questions of pupils and use follow-up questions well to enable pupils to provide more detailed answers. As a result, pupils develop their use of technical terms and deepen their understanding of ideas. For example, one teacher encouraged a pupil to repeat their answer using 'mathematical language'. Other adults who provide support to pupils help children learn well. Their questioning of pupils is usually equally skilful.

- Teaching is good in English and mathematics. It is improving in other subjects. The vast majority of pupils take part in sporting activities and art or music clubs. Pupils understand that they need to work hard in everything they do to learn well.
- Most teachers explain clearly the steps pupils need to take to complete a task successfully. This helps pupils who are uncertain about what is to be learned or are at risk of falling behind. Other pupils, particularly the most able, need more challenge from their teachers so that they can make even better progress. These pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to express their own ideas and this holds them back from making more rapid progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Leaders, including governors, have not, over time, diligently ensured that all staff are clear on up-to-date safeguarding requirements. While pupils' welfare has continued to be secure, governors have not, until very recently, been as thorough as they should have been in checking that school leaders are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Pupils value learning and understand the importance of education for their aspirations and future success. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to express their own ideas or develop their views.
- The school site is secure. Pupils state that they feel safe, noting that there is always an adult to turn to if they have any worries. Day-to-day routines and recently improved systems mean that staff are swift to pick up any concerns about a pupil and to help resolve them. In surveys completed for the inspection, parents, pupils and staff indicate they agree that the school is a safe place for children to learn and develop.
- Pupils have helpful and appropriate opportunities through the curriculum and special events to learn how to avoid risks and keep safe, for example when working online.
- The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take part in sports, trips and other activities. Consequently, most pupils develop other personal and social skills well through their experience of learning at Normand Croft Primary School.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils understand school expectations and, along with adults, reflect the culture of respect and courtesy. Pupils understand what good

behaviour looks like. Most pupils demonstrate this most of the time. Pupils' views and inspection evidence confirm that, on the few occasions that minor behaviour disturbances occur, teachers respond quickly to restore positive attitudes and reduce the impact on learning.

- Through responsibilities such as the school council and 'eco-ambassadors', pupils are involved in helping improve their school. For example, they help maintain the environmental areas within the school.
- Pupils have no concerns about any prejudice-driven behaviour such as bullying. Pupils say that there are very few incidents and they are dealt with quickly and effectively. They say this is a welcoming school where if somebody seems to be without friends, pupils include them in their own conversations and play.
- Leaders persistently emphasise the importance of good attendance to parents and pupils. Absences are checked promptly to ensure the safety of pupils. No group of pupils has low attendance. School leaders have used a wide range of communication methods to reduce the number of families who take extended leave during term time to visit relatives in other countries. For these reasons, attendance has improved overall. It is now broadly in line with the national average for schools. There were no exclusions last year.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The progress that pupils make is now better than at the time of the previous inspection. Improvements in reading and mathematics have been stronger than in writing. Progress in other subjects is also improving.
- Teachers use assessment information well to adjust pupils' work to provide more challenge or support. There is little difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally by the end of Year 6. However, most-able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are not making good enough progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the timely and high-quality support they receive. Pupils who speak English as an additional language learn well. They have many opportunities to practise speaking English and to use important vocabulary across different subjects. There is little overall difference between the progress made by boys and girls by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2015/16 was above the national average because teachers focus on recognising and using sounds and letters across their teaching. This approach helps pupils, and particularly those who have joined this school at times other than the start of a year, to secure adequate reading skills quickly.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics throughout the school. They learn how to use numbers and calculations to understand the importance of mathematics in their lives. Opportunities to practise important skills such as data-handling, reasoning and problem-solving help pupils enjoy learning mathematics and prepare them well for external tests.
- Progress in the wider curriculum is improving to the level of English and mathematics.

History lessons, for example, provide pupils with good opportunities to apply their learning from English lessons and discuss historical events such as the second world war in considerable detail. Most pupils are well prepared for the demands of secondary education.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children join the Nursery class with skills and development that are significantly lower than typical levels for their age in most areas, particularly in communication and speaking. By the end of the Reception Year, even if they have not joined the school at the beginning of Nursery, most of them have made good progress in almost all areas of learning and are ready to move with confidence and excitement into Year 1.
- Achievement information shows that boys have made less progress than girls in the past two years. This difference is still visible when observing children learn, but it is much reduced. Differences between the achievement of disadvantaged children and others nationally diminish quickly because teachers intervene early if any child falls behind. Children who speak English as an additional language learn well because they are given frequent opportunities to practise and develop their spoken English. By the end of Reception Year most children are able to join sounds together and read common words and use this to begin to produce early writing.
- Children are encouraged to use their wide-ranging interests to make, build, imagine and create. Teachers ask questions to make children think deeply and guide them in linking ideas together. Staff are becoming more vigilant about sharing their attention equally across different groups of pupils such as boys, girls and the most able.
- The early years leader knows how well children learn and is rightly proud of their success to date. She has identified clear priorities to drive further improvement. Information about children's learning and development is accurate and wide-ranging. The team is responsive and flexible in how they work together. Parents are well-informed and provide additional evidence about how well their children are learning. These approaches combine to make sure that, whenever they join the early years, most children make good progress.
- The early years learning area is attractive and spacious. It is well resourced and provides diverse opportunities for children to learn and play freely by themselves and with others. They also use the outdoor-play area well to explore the wider world and broaden their interests.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 134273 |
| Local authority | Hammersmith and Fulham |
| Inspection number | 10019674 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 211 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Chris Morrison |
| Headteacher | Nick Holt |
| Telephone number | 020 73856847 |
| Website | www.normandcroftschool.co.uk |
| Email address | head@normandcroft.lbhf.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 16–17 October 2014 |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Normand Croft is a smaller than average primary school. The school is undersubscribed and numbers of pupils in school have fallen over the past four years.
- There is a lower proportion of girls than boys overall, particularly in Year 3.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language than is typical for primary schools. Almost 30% of pupils are of Black African heritage. Others are from a wide variety of different backgrounds.
- The school has lower pupil stability and a much higher deprivation factor than other schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is

higher than average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is much higher than the national average.

- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is much higher than average.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been numerous changes in staffing across the school. There have also been some changes to the structure of the senior leadership team, which now includes the early years leader.
- The governing body runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school site is also a base for a number of community services such as the school nursing and health visitor teams, and is the location for an outreach service managed by Hammersmith & Fulham Adult Learning and Skills Service and the base for the Action on Disability charity.
- The deputy headteacher has taken on the temporary role of acting headteacher since the first part of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place across three days. An Her Majesty’s Inspector returned to the school on 15 December 2016 to gather further evidence on safeguarding and leadership and management. Discussions were held with the new acting headteacher, the chair of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, members of staff, the business manager and pupils, and documentation was reviewed.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across all year groups and a wide range of subjects. Shorter visits to lessons also took place. Some of these were joint visits with senior leaders. Inspectors also visited the breakfast club run by the school.
- During visits to lessons, the inspection team spoke with pupils about how well they were learning and examined work in their books.
- Pupils’ views were additionally considered through a separate discussion and also when they led inspectors around their school as part of a learning walk. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Examples of pupils’ work were examined across Year 1 to Year 6, to gather further evidence about how well they had been learning over a longer time period and in a wide range of subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Additional meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders and the vice-chair of governing body. Separate telephone discussions took place with the chair of governing body, a representative from the local authority and the chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Inspectors looked closely at a wide range of documents, including the school’s view of how well it is performing, development plans, policies and procedures, analyses of pupils’ achievement and leaders’ checks on the quality of teaching.
- There were only three responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. Parents’ views were gathered through discussions at the start of the day.
- Inspectors received 13 responses to the online staff questionnaire. Individual staff were asked questions about safeguarding.

Inspection team

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|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mehar Brar, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Denise James-Mason | Ofsted Inspector |
| Rekha Bhakoo | Ofsted Inspector |
| Amanda Carter-Fraser | Her Majesty’s Inspector |

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