

Alexandra Infant School

Kent House Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1JG

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The recently appointed headteacher has taken effective action to reverse swiftly the trend of declining standards. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher.
- The members of the local committee know the school's strengths and areas for improvement well. They are supported well by the Nexus Trust to fulfil their governance responsibilities.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good across the school. This has resulted in pupils making strong progress in English, mathematics and a wide range of subjects.
- Leadership of the special educational needs provision, both in the school's specialist resource provision and the main school, is effective. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils are exceptionally well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are respectful, polite and well mannered. Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They learn in a calm environment and share very positive relationships with their peers and adults.
- Leaders' work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values is effective.
- The curriculum is skilfully organised. It offers pupils opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in a wide range of subjects.
- Subject leaders have been recently appointed to their roles. They have begun to monitor the quality of teaching and progress in their respective subjects. Nevertheless, it is too soon to evaluate the full impact of their work on pupils' outcomes.
- Pupils learn a range of mathematical concepts and topics according to the standards expected for their age. They are given opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems. However, there are uneven levels of challenge offered to pupils to deepen their learning. At times, this stops them from making even better progress and reaching the greater depth standard.
- Children in the early years make strong progress and are taught well. However, sometimes learning time is wasted because adults' expectations on children's behaviour are inconsistent. This prevents children from making even better progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that there is consistency in the level of challenge offered to pupils in mathematics, including the most able, so that more pupils achieve the greater depth standard at the end of Year 2.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - subject leaders develop their roles in monitoring pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching to raise standards further in their respective subjects.
- Adults in the early years have consistently high expectations and ensure that children follow instructions promptly to get the most out of learning time.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The new headteacher is a visionary leader. She has a clear and strategic view of the direction she and her leaders need to take to secure further improvements. The school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement focus precisely on the correct priorities to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- Over time, there has been turbulence in the leadership and staff teams. This unsettled time for the school resulted in weaker performance in the national assessments at the end of key stage 1. Last year, pupils' attainment was below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The new headteacher has halted this decline and taken action to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. Now, leaders regularly check that the quality of teaching is consistently good, so pupils make strong progress in English and mathematics and across a range of subjects.
- Staff morale is high. Staff share the leaders' high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They value the regular training opportunities they receive to further improve their teaching. This training is having a positive effect on pupils' outcomes.
- Parents agree that the school is well led and managed. Parents spoken to during the inspection identify and appreciate the changes that the leaders have implemented. For example, parents recognise the increased learning opportunities provided to pupils, such as celebrating World Book Day, when pupils dress up as their favourite book characters. The very large majority of parents say they would recommend the school to another parent.
- The leadership of special educational needs provision is effective. Leaders work well with other professionals, such as educational psychologists, to meet the need of pupils. Staff are well trained to support this group of pupils. Leaders check pupils' progress regularly. Consequently, these pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The topic-based approach to the curriculum has been adeptly developed to ensure that pupils develop the key skills in reading, writing and mathematics. It offers pupils opportunities to apply their basic skills in English across a wide range of subjects. For example, as part of their topic on The Great Fire of London, Year 2 pupils published individual books which told their account of how the fire began in a baker's shop. This range of learning opportunities contributes to the strong progress that pupils make across the curriculum.
- Learning is enriched beyond the classroom in a range of ways, such as educational trips, event weeks and opportunities to explore the woodland areas. Pupils talk excitedly about these enjoyable learning experiences. Such aspects of the school's work support pupils' confidence and self-esteem very well.
- Leaders actively develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values. For example, pupils learn about their rights and responsibilities in school. They understand that they have the right to learn and be respected.
- Middle leaders have a good understanding of the standards expected of pupils in their respective subjects. They monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their individual areas of responsibility by looking at pupils' books and ascertaining their

views. Some leaders, but not all, have had the opportunity to visit lessons. This work is at the early stages. Subject leaders, including English and mathematics, currently remain reliant on senior leaders to evaluate and analyse pupils' progress information.

Governance of the school

- Members of the local committee know the key strengths and areas for development of the school well. They play a vital role in the strategic direction of the school by contributing to key documents such as the plans for improvement. Local committee members are effective at working with all stakeholders, including parents, in order to make improvements to the school. They have recently communicated to parents the school's new motto, 'Achieve, Inspire and Succeed'.
- Members of the local committee are effective at asking leaders questions that seek clarification and explanation relating to pupils' outcomes. Since joining the trust, members of the local committee have been well supported and accountability measures have been strengthened.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. An overwhelming majority of parents say that their children are safe and well looked after at school.
- Leaders have created a strong culture of vigilance to safeguard pupils from the risk of potential harm and ensure their well-being. Staff are well trained on safeguarding matters, including the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism, and are alert to changes in pupils' behaviour. They are confident in the use of the school's procedures for raising any safeguarding concerns.
- Leaders provide staff with regular updates on safeguarding issues. This further raises their awareness of any potential harm that pupils may be exposed to. Members of the local committee regularly meet with senior leaders to ensure that safeguarding procedures are sufficiently robust.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are taught effectively to stay safe in a variety of situations. Whole-school events, such as anti-bullying week, have a positive effect on pupils' understanding of safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and learning across the school. They provide teachers with feedback on their lessons and set appropriate targets to improve the quality of teaching further. This is contributing to the strong progress that pupils are making.
- Pupils learn in a supportive learning environment. Pupils regularly discuss their ideas and support each other. This results in pupils becoming confident and independent learners.
- The teaching of phonics is a clear strength of the school. Pupils use their phonic knowledge and skills within lessons to read and spell words correctly. They read with

fluency and accuracy, using their phonics to sound out unfamiliar words. Pupils develop good comprehension skills.

- The teaching of writing is effective and enables pupils to write for a range of purposes and in different styles. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote instructions on how to make a chocolate sandwich. The work in pupils' books shows that they are applying their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills well to produce high-quality writing. Teachers encourage pupils to use interesting vocabulary to capture the readers' interest. As a result, pupils are developing strong writing skills at the standards expected for their age.
- Teachers and additional adults work closely together to provide effective, tailored support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Consequently, they make strong progress in their learning.
- Pupils told inspectors they enjoy learning a range of different subjects. The teaching of art is a strength, as evidenced in the displays around the school. For example, Year 1 pupils learned about the work of Van Gogh and painted their own 'Starry Skies' using oil pastels, wax crayons and watercolour paints.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. The work in pupils' books shows that they are developing strong mathematical knowledge and skills in a range of topics. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their mathematics skills to solve problems and develop their reasoning skills. They are set challenging activities which make them think hard. However, sometimes the questions set within the challenge activities do not sufficiently deepen their learning and understanding. This limits pupils from making even stronger progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners who talk with great confidence about their learning and school life. They listen to each other attentively and show respect for their peers' views.
- The school's personal, social, health and economic education programme is highly effective in facilitating pupils' personal development. For example, major events held in school such as 'Mental Health Week' promote pupils' well-being very well.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is a rare occurrence. They trust school adults who take swift action to address their worries and concerns. The school records support pupils' views that bullying hardly ever happens.
- Pupils talk with maturity for their age about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They have designed posters on internet safety rules which are displayed around the school, to remind pupils of how to keep safe.
- Pupils relish the range of opportunities provided for them to take on additional roles and responsibilities, such as school councillors and playtime buddies. For example, members of the school council regularly share their recommendations on school

improvement aspects with senior leaders. Such roles provide pupils with the opportunities to exercise leadership skills and be responsible for their school community.

- An overwhelming majority of parents say that their children are safe and well looked after at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Leaders have ensured that the school's behaviour management system is implemented very effectively and consistently throughout the school. Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well in classes and around the school. This has resulted in a calm and purposeful environment where pupils feel safe and enjoy learning.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent concentration and collaboration when working in pairs and small groups. They settle quickly and are highly motivated to complete the tasks set. Pupils' exemplary attitudes contribute to their strong outcomes.
- Pupils behave impeccably well in the playground. They enjoy playing different games and play amicably with their friends.
- Pupils' joy of learning is reflected in their attendance, which is above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. This has resulted in pupils making strong progress in reading, writing, mathematics and in a range of subjects.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average last year.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils at end of key stage 1 who met the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national averages. The proportion of pupils who achieved the greater depth standard in reading and mathematics was below the national averages. The proportion of pupils who met the greater depth standard in writing was above average.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below that of other pupils nationally, both at the expected and greater depth standards.
- Leaders have introduced a new system that enables them to regularly and carefully monitor each pupil's progress in reading, writing and mathematics to ensure that no pupil is left behind. As a result, outcomes for pupils have improved this year. Leaders' actions to improve pupils' outcomes are now having a positive effect.
- The school's assessment information and work in pupils' books show that most pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their end of early years starting points. This includes the very small

number of disadvantaged pupils.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those with autistic spectrum disorder, are also making good progress. Leaders and teachers carefully check these pupils' needs and put in place targeted support and interventions.
- The work in pupils' books and on displays around the school shows that all pupils are making good progress in a wide range of subjects. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects. For example, pupils use their understanding of time to investigate the types of exercise they can do in one minute.
- The most able pupils make strong progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The work in pupils' mathematics books shows that pupils are regularly asked to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving tasks. However, sometimes the challenges that teachers set do not deepen pupils' learning sufficiently. This results in some pupils, including the most able, not making even better progress.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership of the early years is effective. Leaders carefully check the quality of teaching and children's progress in their learning and development.
- In 2017, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was in line with the national average. This means that they were well equipped with the basic literacy, numeracy and personal skills required for their learning in key stage 1.
- The school's assessment information and the work in children's books show that children currently in the Reception Year are making strong progress. Most of them are on track to achieve a good level of development in 2018.
- Adults plan and offer a range of exciting activities to support children's learning. For example, during the inspection children attended a 'mini-beast workshop' where they learned about different insects. Adults provide a range of resources, both indoors and outdoors, to support children's learning and development. For example, the theatre in the outdoor area provides children with good opportunities to use their imagination and participate in role play.
- Staff ensure that partnerships with parents are strong and purposeful. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for parents to learn about how they can help their children at home. For example, they are offered workshops on reading and mathematics. This provides good continuity for learning between home and school.
- Children are very well behaved. They play and learn well together, sharing resources and cooperating with each other. Sometimes, adults do not insist that children follow their instructions promptly and are not always reminded to pay attention. As result, learning time is wasted, preventing some children from making even better progress.

School details

Unique reference number	140451
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10048317

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ian Anderson
Headteacher	Alison Hills
Telephone number	020 8778 4714
Website	www.alexandra-infants.org.uk
Email address	admin@alexandra-inf.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy on 1 December 2013 and joined the Nexus Education Schools Trust on 1 May 2018. The headteacher was appointed in September 2017.
- A local committee is in place and members of this committee are responsible to the board of trustees of the Nexus Education Schools Trust.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for 18 pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average, while the proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to all classes, including the specialist resource provision, to observe pupils' learning. Almost all of these were observed jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books within and outside lessons.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in a range of contexts, including lesson time and lunchtime. The lead inspector met with a group of pupils to elicit their views about learning and school life.
- An inspector listened to pupils read from Years 1 and 2.
- Meetings were held with leaders at all levels, including members of the local committee. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the chief executive officer of Nexus Education Schools Trust and met with a member of the central team. She also talked to an external consultant who offers her professional services to the school.
- Inspectors considered 65 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. Inspectors met with parents at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement and information related to pupils' progress and attainment.

Inspection team

Rajeshree Mehta, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Ofsted Inspector

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