

Inspection of a good school: Northlands Primary School

Pinders Lane, Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 2SS

Inspection dates:

12–13 November 2019

Outcome

Northlands Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's ethos is 'one community – many cultures – achieving together'. Linked to this, leaders and staff want all pupils to work side by side to do their very best. They have successfully created a close-knit school community where this happens.

Pupils are happy, safe, confident and enjoy spending time with their friends. They value the range of extra activities and special events that the school organises to support their learning and make it fun, especially the trips to Conover and London. Pupils say, 'It's a good school because you get to be with your friends and we have opportunities to learn.'

There is a calm atmosphere around the entire school. Pupils get along with each other and enjoy learning. Staff reward good behaviour. The reward of 'NORTS' is very popular among the pupils. Any negative behaviour is dealt with effectively and consistently. Bullying is rare, but when it does happen, pupils say that staff are quick to deal with it.

Parents value the welcoming feel of the school and the friendly personalities of the staff. They find staff approachable and easy to talk to. Parents say, 'It's a perfect school where children come home happy every day.'

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

When children join the Reception class they settle quickly. This is because staff work closely with parents before their children start school and throughout the year. Parents appreciate this. Strong, caring relationships exist between the staff and the children. Children learn lots of new things quickly due to the work of skilled staff. Staff fill any gaps in children's knowledge or experiences, so that their learning is not held back. The development of children's language skills is a whole-school priority. Children are confident and cheerful. They are particularly excited about the newly-hatched chicks that they will soon be meeting.

Most of the curriculum is well planned. In many subjects, including English and

mathematics, teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn and when they need to learn it. This helps teachers to plan lessons that build on what pupils have learned before. In these subjects, pupils remember what they have been taught and understand it. They use this knowledge to help them learn new things. Pupils' knowledge and skills build well over time. Pupils who are disadvantaged do very well.

In some subjects, such as design and technology and music, the order of learning is not so well planned. Lessons do not always build on what pupils have learned before. As a result, teachers have to go back and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. This slows learning down. Therefore, pupils are not achieving as well as they could in these areas.

Most of the time, teachers provide work that makes learning purposeful and interesting. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in all aspects of school life. Staff are well trained to identify and support the needs of pupils with SEND. They provide extra support when required. Staff ensure that work is well matched to the ability of all pupils, including the most able.

Staff manage behaviour well across the school. In most lessons, teaching is not interrupted, so pupils can learn. Behaviour outside of the classroom is also very positive due to effective systems that leaders have put in place.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. From the very start of Reception, staff teach phonics well. This continues throughout Years 1 and 2. This is a result of effective whole-school training. Pupils across the school are developing a love of reading and they enjoy sharing books.

Pastoral care is one of the school's strengths. Staff know pupils well and they take great care of them. They provide extra support in many ways. Especially, for pupils who are anxious or lack confidence. Pupils trust staff to help them with any problems they face.

Pupils can take on extra responsibilities in school, such as learning to learn ambassadors. Staff are committed to raising pupils' aspirations. For example, pupils attend sporting and musical events, such as 'young voices'.

The school is well led. Short-term changes to the leadership team have provided staff with opportunities to take on new responsibilities. Leaders new to their role are doing an excellent job. Leaders value their staff, and staff respect their leaders. Staff say that they feel 'trusted' to get on with their job. They appreciate this immensely.

Governors are supporting the school to provide the best possible education for its pupils. They take their role seriously. They make thorough checks on English and mathematics. However, they are less confident when checking the quality of education in other subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are aware that keeping pupils safe is the responsibility of everyone. It is their top

priority. Leaders check staff's suitability to work with children before they start to work at the school. Leaders have trained staff well and they provide regular safeguarding updates. As a result, staff know how to spot signs that may potentially worry them about a pupil's welfare. Staff record and pass on any concerns they have to leaders. Leaders deal with these concerns appropriately. Therefore, pupils get the support they need. All safeguarding procedures are clear and well understood.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is designed, planned and ordered effectively in many subjects. However, it is not yet sufficiently planned and sequenced in some of the foundation subjects, such as design and technology and music. Consequently, pupils do not do as well as they could. Leaders are already acting to address this. These subjects need to be planned and ordered to develop pupils' knowledge and skills over time.
- Governors carry out their range of duties with great diligence. This includes monitoring the quality of education within the school. They make thorough checks on English and mathematics. However, their ability to check on some of the foundation subjects is less effective. As a result, they do not have as clear a picture of these areas as they do in English and mathematics. Governors should further develop their understanding of the whole curriculum. Consequently, they will be better equipped to hold school leaders to account for the quality of education in all curriculum areas.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Northlands Primary School to be good on 11–12 November 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	125576
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10111755
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Orlando Arnold
Headteacher	Leah Adams
Website	www.northlands-school.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 November 2015

Information about this school

- The school has a breakfast club. This provision is managed by the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and acting headteacher. He met with four members of the governing body, including the chair. The inspector held a telephone conversation with the chairperson of the Rugby Town Consortium.
- The inspector held meetings with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), designated safeguarding lead and the early years leader.
- As part of the inspection, the inspector completed deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and music. He met with groups of pupils, curriculum leaders and teachers to talk about the quality of education at the school.
- The inspector made visits to classrooms. Many of these visits were with curriculum leaders or the SENCo.
- The inspector listened to several groups of pupils read.
- The inspector spoke with pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school. He looked at their work to see how well the curriculum is

applied.

- Documents relating to safeguarding were checked, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children prior to employment. The inspector checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively across the school.
- The inspector talked to parents after school. He considered the 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 16 free-text responses received during the inspection.
- The inspector considered the 23 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation provided by the school. He looked at the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, published information about pupils' performance, behaviour records, attendance information and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector looked at published information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Wayne Simner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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