

Inspection of a good school: Northwood Primary School

Northwood Place, Erith, Kent DA18 4HN

Inspection dates:

10–11 December 2019

Outcome

Northwood Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. They are kind, caring and considerate. They behave well in lessons and are keen to do their very best. One pupil told me, expressing the views of others, that, 'This is a school that cares about children. All the staff are very supportive, and everyone is made to feel welcome.'

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils are proud of their achievements and are determined to improve. Classrooms and corridors are filled with bright and attractive displays. Pupils told me they find their work challenging, fun and enjoyable.

Pupils take responsibility in order to support the well-being of others. 'Ambassadors' and 'well-being champions' ensure that everyone feels well cared for, respected and valued. Pupils feel safe in school. Incidents of bullying and name-calling are rare. Eco-warriors raise pupils' awareness of the need to keep active, to make healthy food choices and to protect the natural environment.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities. They are curious about the world around them and enjoy educational visits to museums and galleries. Pupils have regular opportunities to perform for parents and carers, and this develops their confidence.

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

Leaders, including governors, have developed ambitious and challenging plans for how subjects are taught in the school. The curriculum extends beyond the classroom and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils engage fully in their learning, and lessons are free from low-level disruption.

Pupils achieve well because knowledge and skills are taught in a clear sequence. Pupils embed their learning by applying what they already know. This deepens their understanding. Pupils know more and remember more through regular opportunities to

practise their skills.

For example, in history, leaders have identified the knowledge, skills and vocabulary needed for each lesson. Teachers ensure that pupils' knowledge builds. Leaders' plans are working well in Years 1 and 2. Pupils confidently remember key historical facts and can explain why things happened. They are successful because they refer back to their previous learning. However, older pupils have not built up a strong base of historical knowledge in previous years. Leaders have identified this and are looking at ways to help pupils fill these gaps.

Leaders' plans for how mathematics is taught are successful in most classes. Pupils have strong number skills and their teachers help them to recall essential information and number facts. Pupils often have opportunities to practise their number skills across different subjects and to solve mathematical problems. However, this is not routine in some classes.

Some subject plans are not developed so well. Leaders are aware of this and are refining how these subjects are planned. For example, pupils have a weak general knowledge of world geography. They cannot recall what has been taught previously.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained so that pupils learn to read well. Pupils in all years develop the phonics skills they need to become confident and fluent readers. Children in the Reception Year swiftly develop their reading skills. Leaders check that children read books at home and school that enable them to practise the sounds they learn. They enjoy the stories, including nursery rhymes and traditional stories that their teachers read to them each day.

Pupils are encouraged to read a wide range of high-quality books throughout their time at the school. They can work out the sound of words but are sometimes hesitant when reading new vocabulary and do not recognise or know the meaning of the word they have read. Pupils use of more ambitious vocabulary in their speaking and writing is underdeveloped.

Leaders are determined that no pupils are left behind in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in their learning and achieve well. Pupils with SEND have high-quality education and health care plans. Teachers identify pupils who may require additional support, for example with speech and language, and staff help them to catch up quickly. Leaders use wisely the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, so they achieve as well as others.

Leaders are very supportive of all staff. They are committed to staff well-being and considerate of teacher workload. Teachers told me they are happy in their work and many have taught in the school over a long period of time. Parents and staff feel the school is well led and managed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know the pupils and their families well. All staff are trained to identify signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They follow clear procedures on how to report concerns. Leaders work closely with the local authority to protect vulnerable pupils. Some staff have received mental health first-aid training. They offer mentoring and counselling. Pupils learn how to keep safe online. Staff work with outside agencies to help pupils stay safe outside school. Guest speakers, including the police, have raised pupils' awareness of the dangers of gangs and knife crime. All suitability checks are in place for the appointment of staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' plans ensure that pupils learn to read well. However, pupils need more opportunities to develop their vocabulary. This will improve their confidence as well as their reading and writing skills.
- Leaders need to ensure that pupils have opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to more complex tasks, including problem-solving, across all year groups.
- Pupils achieve well across the curriculum. However, pupils need to develop their general knowledge of the world around them. Leaders need to refine subject plans to ensure that knowledge and skills build over time. Older pupils in key stage 2 have gaps in their history knowledge and need opportunities to revisit previous learning.

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 the predecessor school, Northwood Primary School, to be good in October 2016.

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

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| Unique reference number | 144540 |
| Local authority | Bexley |
| Inspection number | 10124661 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 200 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of governing body | Revd. Mike Leader |
| Principal | Catherine McNulty |
| Website | www.northwood.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Northwood Primary School joined the Trinitas Multi-Academy Trust on 1 July 2017. When its predecessor school, Northwood Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with: the chief executive officer of the trust; the principal and vice-principal; the chair and vice-chair of the governing body; members of the senior leadership team; subject leaders; the learning mentor; and the rights respecting leader. I also had a telephone conversation with the school improvement adviser.
- Deep dives were carried out in reading, mathematics and history. I visited all classrooms with senior leaders. I spoke with pupils about their learning, looked at their work and listened to them read. I visited the playground to observe pupils at play. I met with groups of pupils to hear their views of the school.
- I scrutinised a wide range of documents. These included the school development plan, the school self-evaluation, safeguarding records, behaviour and first-aid logs, risk assessments and attendance data.
- I met with parents informally at the start of the school day. I also considered the nine

responses from Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Tom Canning, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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