

# Inspection of Muswell Hill Primary School

Muswell Hill, London N10 3ST

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Inspection dates: 1 and 2 December 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to belong to this warm and vibrant school community. Leaders have high expectations across all areas of the school. They want pupils to develop the essential knowledge and skills to be successful in life. Parents and carers typically speak highly of the school. Most value the support that pupils receive. Pupils behave well and have strong working relationships with each other and with teachers. Pupils are safe. Bullying is rare and pupils know that staff would resolve it if it were to happen.

Pupils enjoy participating in the many sporting events the school organises. They want to do their best. Pupils work hard in their lessons and enjoy their learning. Pupils answer questions enthusiastically because they have the knowledge needed to give accurate responses.

Leaders actively promote pupils' personal development. Pupils relish the leadership opportunities available to them, such as being 'inclusion ambassadors'. Pupils read often. Leaders make sure that texts are varied and representative of all people in society. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn about important world issues, such as climate change. They get involved in supporting charities, including the food bank.

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

Leaders understand that pupils need to learn to read from an early age. They are clear about what they want pupils to achieve. Older pupils enjoy the school's reading programme, which gives them time to read the books they enjoy with senior leaders. Younger pupils read regularly. They try hard and use their phonics knowledge to build up their reading fluency and accuracy. However, leaders have not ensured that all staff have the necessary expertise to carefully match pupils' reading books to the sounds that they have learned. When this happens, some pupils struggle.

Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and can access the full curriculum. Leaders work with teachers, parents and external partners to create individual plans that support pupils' learning. These plans include using speech and language therapists, who help pupils to develop their knowledge of sounds. Well-targeted support from staff also helps pupils to improve their reading fluency.

Leaders plan carefully what they want pupils to know and remember through the curriculum. For example, in history, pupils spoke confidently about how their knowledge of Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale had helped them to compare people in history. In physical education (PE), pupils develop knowledge and skills through learning about a range of sports and activities, such as rugby, yoga and swimming. Pupils have the opportunity to achieve sports coaching awards. Teachers make sure that what pupils know and can do in PE develops well over time from early years to Year 6. Teachers promote appropriate opportunities for discussion. For

instance, pupils spoke clearly about how the Kingdom of Benin and the British Empire are linked throughout history. Pupils achieve well.

Teachers provide pupils with different opportunities to revisit what they have been taught previously. Pupils like to share the things they remember. For example, in early years, children used their knowledge of shapes to design pictures. In a few subjects, it is harder for leaders and staff to find out what pupils know and remember. This is because teachers sometimes set work and assessment tasks without being fully clear about the subject knowledge pupils need to practise or recall. Instead, tasks focus too heavily on pupils' writing skills rather than developing subject-specific knowledge.

Leaders set up clear routines to manage behaviour. Staff in early years settle children into school quickly and successfully. Children know the routines and behave very well. Children are happy and respectful of each other. This excellent behaviour continues throughout the school. Teachers use well-thought-out support plans to help individual pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. As a result, these pupils engage with their learning for longer periods of time. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly.

Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from an extensive range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. A very large number of pupils participate in the many clubs available. Leaders encourage pupils to celebrate differences. Through the curriculum, they want pupils to find out about people from different backgrounds. In art, pupils learn about artists from different cultures.

Leaders and staff work well as a team. Leaders are mindful of staff's well-being and workload. They focus on promoting pupils' and staff's mental health. Governors are knowledgeable, and support leaders well. Leaders value the ongoing support and guidance from governors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers at the beginning of their career are enthusiastic about the support they receive. They said that the school is a great learning community, not just for pupils, but also for staff.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils, their families and the community very well. Staff are vigilant and report concerns quickly. Leaders keep a careful check on pupils who need extra help. They give pupils the right support, and work effectively with external agencies. Leaders put a range of methods in place to protect vulnerable pupils. Governors understand their role in maintaining an effective culture of safeguarding in the school.

Pupils understand what they need to do to stay safe, including when using the internet. In an age-appropriate way, staff help pupils to understand about friendships and healthy relationships.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teachers give books to pupils that are not precisely matched to the sounds that they know. Leaders need to strengthen staff's expertise in making sure that reading books are matched carefully to pupils' place in the phonics programme. This will enable pupils to be extremely familiar with sounds that they know and help to increase pupils' reading fluency and confidence.
- In a few subjects, written tasks and assessments are not sharply focused on subject-specific knowledge. Sometimes, this is because these tasks are linked primarily to the development of pupils' literacy skills. This means that it is difficult for teachers to check whether pupils have learned subject content. Leaders should ensure that teachers routinely set work and assessment tasks that support them to check and improve pupils' understanding of subject-specific knowledge.

## 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 think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131871
<b>Local authority</b>	Haringey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199327
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Alexa Charnley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Howells
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.muswellhillprimary.co.uk">www.muswellhillprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 December 2006, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school offers before- and after-school childcare provision on site.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, special educational needs coordinator, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body, including the chair. Inspectors spoke with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science, history, art and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders, looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in Mandarin, geography and personal, social, health and economic education.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. Inspectors met with the leaders in charge of safeguarding and checked safeguarding records. Inspectors checked the school's single central record of staff suitability.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils and their contributions to the online surveys. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the inspection. The responses to Ofsted Parent View, including written responses, were considered.

### **Inspection team**

Rebekah Iiyambo, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Tim McLoughlin	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector

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