

Inspection of Harlesden Primary School

Acton Lane, London NW10 8UT

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are polite and friendly. They were eager to tell inspectors about their learning and about how much they enjoy coming to school.

Leaders are ambitious for all their pupils. They want them to thrive and to be able to have rich experiences to broaden their understanding of and outlook on the world. Leaders have adapted the curriculum to ensure that it is interesting and relevant to all pupils. Pupils know that teachers want the best for them, and they work hard to reach these high expectations.

Pupils behave well and are kind and well-mannered to each other. They said that bullying can happen in school but is rare and that it is not tolerated. Pupils know that they can talk with staff about any problems or use the worry boxes in their classrooms or on the school's website. Staff sort out any concerns effectively.

Pupils have opportunities to develop responsibilities in the school. Pupils are elected to be school councillors for example, and others have roles as ambassadors. Pupils and families are greeted each morning by the 'readiness ambassador' who checks that everyone is ready to learn. Ambassadors for reflection and remembrance remind people to recycle and be mindful of the environment.

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

Leaders prioritise reading. They ensure that children get a strong start in the early years. Nursery-aged children enjoy hearing and learning the sounds that letters make. A well-planned phonics programme enables pupils to continue to develop their reading skills and become fluent readers as they progress through the school. Staff have received appropriate training on early reading. They ensure that books are carefully chosen to match the sounds that pupils are learning at each stage of the phonics programme. Leaders ensure that staff regularly assess how well pupils are learning to read. Pupils who struggle with their phonics have extra help to catch up.

Pupils spoke positively about reading and can readily discuss their favourite books and authors. Staff have considered carefully how the books in school can promote diversity and difference.

The curriculum is well sequenced. In most subjects, leaders have set out the key skills, knowledge and vocabulary pupils should learn. Staff routinely revisit and check pupils' understanding of prior learning. For example, in mathematics, teachers use small quizzes, 'flashback 5s', to consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers explain new learning clearly so that pupils know how this builds on what they have been taught in earlier lessons.

In a few subjects, teachers are less clear on what pupils need to learn and remember. Leaders have not broken their expectations down as clearly as in other subjects. Over time, pupils do not learn and remember some key facts securely. In computing, for instance, pupils' understanding of key knowledge and vocabulary is underdeveloped because these ideas have not been revisited regularly. This makes it more difficult for pupils to deepen their learning and apply what they know to understand the more complex ideas that come later in the curriculum.

Leaders have made sure that effective systems are in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are well supported in their learning so that they are able to access the same curriculum as their peers.

Leaders choose activities which aim to develop pupils' self-confidence and broaden their experiences. There is a variety of after-school clubs including sports, African drumming and gardening. Leaders look beyond the school to extend all pupils' wider development. For example, pupils have opportunities to kayak on the Grand Union canal and to work with visiting theatre companies. Pupils also learn about being respectful citizens. They are encouraged to put what they learn into practice, for example, by carrying out litter picks on the streets around the school. Pupils behave well and make the most of their learning time. Pupils who are new to the school, including those who have recently arrived in the country, are supported to settle in well.

The early years curriculum has been well considered. It prepares children successfully for their future learning. Staff provide pupils with activities that are well designed and matched to children's interests and developing needs. Fundamental knowledge in language, communication and mathematics are clear priorities. For example, children count and use mathematical language with growing confidence. Staff provide children with positive role models when speaking and listening. Parents and carers feel that staff keep them well informed. One parent, summing up the views of many others, said, 'The staff are always here to help'.

Staff said that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. Staff are appreciative of the training and development opportunities leaders provide.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know the safeguarding issues their pupils may face. Members of the pastoral team work closely with pupils and their families. They know their needs well and what action to take when there are concerns.

Leaders work with national charities to help pupils learn how they can stay safe, including online.

Leaders have regular meetings with staff to discuss any concerns about pupils' well-being. Leaders keep robust records of any incidents. They are aware of each pupil's

needs and monitor pupils' welfare closely. Leaders work with outside organisations and professionals to support and keep vulnerable pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking has not identified precisely the essential knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and remember. This affects how well pupils are able to use prior learning to develop a deeper understanding in these subjects. Leaders should refine further their curriculum thinking in these subjects so that teachers are clear on what pupils need to know and remember in order to understand and master more complex ideas.

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 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

Unique reference number	101499
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10227407
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Narinder Nathan
Headteacher	Sarah Wawn
Website	www.harlesdenschool.com
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders changed the management structure of the school, reducing from three assistant headteachers to two in September 2021.
- The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

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

- The inspectors met with the headteacher and members of staff. The inspectors met with representatives of the local authority and met with members of the governing body.

- The inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, computing and design and technology. For each of these subjects the inspector held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils and looked at pupils' work. The inspectors also considered pupils' learning in some other subjects.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. They considered safeguarding records, documentation and the school's single central record of staff suitability checks.
- The inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. They also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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