

Inspection of a good school: Leopold Primary School

Hawkshead Road, Willesden, London NW10 9UR

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 June 2022

Outcome

Leopold Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leopold is a diverse school community where pupils listen respectfully to each other, behave well in class and work hard.

Teachers have high expectations. They make time to stop and check that every pupil understands new learning before moving on. Pupils rise to their teachers' high expectations. They said that they keep trying when learning is difficult until they succeed. Pupils relish opportunities to play musical instruments and sing together in school and in public performances. Over 100 pupils receive individual music tuition.

Pupils who are struggling to read enjoy the extra support they get from senior leaders. Leaders listen to these pupils read every day. Pupils like taking on leadership roles. For example, pupils can join the school council which raises money for different aspects of school life, such as improving playtimes.

Leaders have worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well. Leaders work closely with pupils who are finding life in school difficult. Leaders encourage these pupils with their learning and behaviour. Pupils who are worried or anxious can drop into the school's counselling service.

Pupils are safe and happy in school. If problems occur, staff sort things out quickly, including any bullying.

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

There has been turbulence in leadership and staffing since the previous inspection. Together with members of the governing body, the new leadership team has identified and tackled any problems quickly and effectively.

Leaders prioritise reading. After the interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders have provided refresher training in reading for the whole-school staff. Leaders

regularly teach alongside new staff and trainee teachers. As a result, all staff are experts in early reading and teach phonics in a consistent way. Pupils who need extra help have one-to-one support. These extra sessions help pupils to keep up. Through workshops and online resources, parents and carers receive guidance on how to help their children's reading at home. Parents who speak English as an additional language especially appreciate this. Pupils take home books which match the sounds they learn in class so that they can practise their reading. Pupils become increasingly confident and enjoy books.

Leaders' focus on reading continues as pupils move through the school. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 take part in daily reading activities. They learn how to summarise information and how to infer meaning from different types of text.

Pupils achieve well. Leaders have carefully thought through what pupils need to learn in each subject. The curriculum is well sequenced. This helps pupils to learn and remember important knowledge over time. For example, in music, children in the Reception Year learned to use egg-shakers to follow the beat patterns of a song. In Year 1, pupils played violins to a steady beat. In Year 5, pupils accurately copied complex beats on their drums.

In a few units of subject work, leaders have not broken down the knowledge that pupils need to know into small steps. When this happens, teachers are sometimes unsure how to explain subject matter clearly. This means that some pupils do not develop all the detailed knowledge they need for future learning.

Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly. They begin a new unit of work by reminding pupils about what they have learned previously. For example, before pupils learned about converting kilometres into metres, teachers went back over pupils' previous work on decimals. Teachers identify and address quickly any gaps in pupils' understanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. This enables these pupils to take part in the same learning as other pupils. Staff ensured that pupils who found it difficult to add numbers quickly had a measurement task broken down into smaller steps. This enabled these pupils to tackle mathematics problems effectively.

Children play happily in the early years. They make friends and develop confidence in their learning. Children learn about the world around them, for example through playing with sand and water and digging in the soil.

Pupils behave well and show determination in lessons. Pupils who have recently joined the school, including those at the very early stages of learning English, said that they appreciate the help they receive. Leaders have worked effectively with a small number of pupils who need support to improve their behaviour. However, a few parents were concerned about behaviour in school and said that leaders do not respond to their worries.

Pupils have many opportunities for learning beyond the school and local community. They take part in a variety of educational visits. Some have sung or played music to large audiences in venues around London. Leaders support pupils' emotional well-being and

mental health in many ways. This includes play therapy at lunchtimes and individual sessions with specialist counsellors.

Members of the governing body support leaders well. They challenge leaders to keep improving the school. Staff said that leaders look out for their well-being and take care to manage their workload. Teachers appreciate leaders' support for their continued professional development. This includes opportunities to see other teachers in action.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. They learn about the risks they might face outside school. For example, pupils are taught about unhealthy friendships which could lure them into a gang or unsafe activity online.

Leaders carry out appropriate checks on new staff or volunteers before they can work in the school. However, in the past some of the details of those checks were not recorded on the school's central record.

Staff are trained to recognise when they should be concerned about pupils' welfare and safety. Leaders respond promptly to concerns raised by staff. They work effectively with other professionals from external agencies to keep vulnerable pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have developed effective approaches to improving behaviour in the school. Pupils behave well. However, some parents are concerned about how well leaders manage pupils' behaviour. Leaders should continue their work to engage with parents so that there is a shared understanding of the school's work to support pupils' behaviour.
- Leaders have planned the curriculum well. They have carefully considered what pupils need to learn over time. In a few subjects, and in some units of work, leaders' curriculum thinking is not precise. This means that teachers are not clear about exactly what pupils need to know and remember in these units of work. Leaders should ensure that where this is the case, teachers know what they need to teach and when.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2011.

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	101504
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10212456
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	693
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alan McDougall
Headteacher	Rachel Mollett
Website	www.leopoldprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school occupies two sites. The school operates from Leopold Primary, Hawkeshead Road, Willesden, London NW10 9UR and Leopold Gwenneth Rickus, 242 to 250 Brentfield Road, London NW10 8HE.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2021.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the two heads of school, and other senior leaders. They met with representatives of the governing body. Inspectors met with the leader responsible for SEND provision.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, music and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors looked at the single central record of staff suitability checks. They also reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking records and talking to leaders, staff, parents, pupils and governors.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and also spoke to pupils informally during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, staff and pupils, including responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils, and free-text responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with some parents as they dropped their children off at school and at home time.

Inspection team

Julian Grenier, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Jaeggi

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