

Inspection of a good school: Blanche Nevile School

Burlington Road, Muswell Hill, London N10 1NJ

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2023

Outcome

Blanche Nevile School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this special school. They feel safe and they are happy. All pupils learn British Sign Language (BSL) as well as English. Communication threads through everything at the school. BSL is a vital and vibrant aspect of school life. Pupils and adults communicate throughout the day with humour and warmth.

Pupils learn academic subjects. They also learn about deaf culture and history. The curriculum supports pupils to develop an understanding of their own identity. Pupils grow in confidence while they are at the school. Adults prepare pupils well for their next steps when they leave at the end of Year 11.

The school expects all pupils to do their best. In lessons, pupils behave well and work hard. There are lots of trips and visits to support the curriculum. Pupils go to museums, theatres and shops. They take part in outdoor and adventurous activities, such as climbing. They also go to events that are for the deaf community, including sports activities. Pupils often learn and socialise with their hearing peers in mainstream partner schools.

Bullying is never tolerated. If it does occur, then adults deal with it effectively.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well designed. It covers the full range of academic subjects. In addition, the curriculum goes beyond the academic. It supports the personal development of pupils strongly. There is an appropriate focus on the teaching of BSL and deaf studies. This is an important and essential part of the school's unique 'bilingual' curriculum. Pupils learn about deaf role models, in history and the present. From the early years, pupils learn that they can achieve highly and that their deafness is something to be proud of and celebrated.

The school's culture and ethos of inclusion underpin the curriculum. Leaders and staff model the values of the school and celebrate the achievements of pupils with pride. Pupils learn without disruption in lessons. There are high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects they teach. They also have the specialist knowledge and skills that they need to teach deaf pupils. They check what pupils know and remember at regular intervals. However, in some subjects, leaders have not identified clearly the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn. Sometimes, teachers' assessment of what pupils know is not matched closely enough to what pupils have been learning.

Leaders prioritise reading. By the start of early years, pupils are learning to read using phonics. Pupils who join the school in later years have lessons in phonics if they are still learning to decode text. Leaders have ensured that a structured programme is in place for teaching phonics. Leaders and those responsible for early reading adapt this programme so that it meets the needs of pupils.

There is a wide range of activities to support the personal development of pupils. Leaders establish and develop communication for each pupil as a priority. Pupils learn how to be independent, to ask and answer questions, to be inquisitive and to develop a love of learning. Teachers help pupils develop an understanding of key information and knowledge that they may have missed in their early development.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school. They feel that leaders listen and that they consider their workload. All staff have an unrelenting focus on doing what is right for pupils. Leaders, including governors, are providing pupils with a high-quality education. They show a determination to ensure that they build further on the school's current strengths.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are meticulous in their approach to safeguarding. Staff know how to report concerns about pupils, and leaders follow up any concerns quickly. Leaders have ensured that there is a system for keeping records and that pupils get help from external agencies if they need it.

School staff receive regular training in child protection, and all policies and systems reflect current guidance. Leaders, governors and staff are very aware of why pupils at the school might be more vulnerable because of their particular needs.

There are appropriate checks on the suitability of all staff who work or volunteer at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the key knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn is not always clear. This means that pupils do not consistently acquire a deep and well-connected body of knowledge in these subjects. Leaders should identify, precisely, the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn and in what order.
- Assessment does not consistently match the key content being taught. This means that teachers do not know, precisely, what pupils know and remember. Leaders should ensure that teachers assess the curriculum content that pupils are learning. They should also ensure that teachers use assessment to inform their teaching so that pupils' misconceptions are addressed.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2012.

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.

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	102175
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10255529
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ruth Griffiths
Headteacher	Martyn Rawlinson
Website	www.blanchenevile.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Blanche Nevile School is a special school for deaf pupils aged three to 16 in the London Borough of Haringey.
- The school provides for pupils with an education, health and care plan which identifies sensory and/or physical needs.
- The school has a primary department located at Storey Road, Highgate, London N6 4ED.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, early reading and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at, and spoke to leaders about, some other subjects, including English, music and science.
- Meetings were held with the interim headteacher and with senior leaders, staff, pupils, the chair of governors and the safeguarding governor.
- Inspectors met with the safeguarding leads, and scrutinised school policies and records of the safeguarding checks on adults who work at the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of 44 members of staff who responded to the Ofsted staff survey. They also considered 12 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Hook

Ofsted Inspector

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