

Inspection of Northside Primary School

2 Albert Street, North Finchley, London N12 8JP

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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 14 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 appreciate the care that staff show towards them. Adults put pupils' well-being at the heart of everything they do. Attendance and punctuality levels are high because pupils enjoy coming to learn at school.

Northside Primary is an exciting place to learn in. This is underpinned by leaders' high expectations. They are determined that every pupil will achieve well academically. The curriculum is carefully planned and enables pupils to learn successfully in different subjects. Staff also provide a wealth of engaging curriculum days to supplement what pupils learn in lessons. Pupils explained that these days motivate them to feel part of the school community.

Pupils feel inspired to behave extremely well. The school atmosphere is orderly, and pupils are polite and highly respectful. They strive to follow the values that shape the school's ethos. Pupils said that this has helped them to improve their attitudes to learning.

Pupils learn about bullying and understand the importance of reporting it. Adults take any concerns seriously and deal with incidents swiftly.

Pupils enjoy the extensive range of clubs on offer, such as gardening, netball and basketball. These clubs are well attended. Many pupils learn to play an instrument and take part in concerts. Pupils spoke positively about events that leaders organise which help them to understand and consider the needs of others. They want everyone to feel welcome at their school.

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

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils should learn and achieve. They have established clear aims in all subject areas. The academic curriculum is broad, and enriched by a wide range of experiences outside of the classroom, such as being an eco-ambassador.

Teachers deliver the English, mathematics and science curriculums in a way that ensures that pupils' knowledge becomes secure. In some other wider curriculum subjects, the delivery of the curriculum is not as well focused on developing pupils' understanding of key concepts. At times, activities overly emphasise helping pupils to get better at writing rather than the subject that pupils are learning. This makes it harder for pupils to fully grasp and retrieve previous learning, and to link new subject content to what they have learned before.

Leaders and teachers are determined for all pupils to be confident readers. Children in the early years get off to a strong start. From Nursery onwards, the curriculum for early reading is ambitious and well planned. Nursery-age children are taught the knowledge they need to be ready for their learning in Reception. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable in teaching phonics. The order that pupils should learn

and practise phonic knowledge is clearly set out, and teachers follow this consistently. Pupils' reading books are well matched to the sounds that they know. Leaders work closely with parents and carers to support them to read with their children at home.

Leaders have designed the reading curriculum around a range of 'terrific texts'. These have been chosen to provide pupils with a rich variety of reading experiences. Teachers share their enjoyment in reading. Pupils love listening to stories and rhymes, and this helps to improve their vocabulary.

Leaders have also thought about how the curriculum in other subjects supports the development of language and communication. This work is well established in the early years. Staff expertly develop children's ability to express themselves, teaching them to understand and use new words with confidence. In other year groups, however, leaders' work to help pupils to understand and use important vocabulary in some of the wider curriculum subjects is less firmly established. This remains an area of priority for leaders and staff.

In the early years, children have great fun learning together. For example, they enjoy developing their physical skills as they stretch, slide and carry objects in the classrooms. Staff help children to do this sensibly. They support children to follow routines, play well with each other and use resources independently. In older year groups, pupils behave in a consistently kind and respectful way. They are confident and include others. The high expectations for behaviour also exist for attendance. Staff manage attendance with rigour.

Leaders and staff have created a school community that promotes inclusion exceptionally well. The design of the curriculum caters effectively for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are fully involved in lessons and their needs are understood. Teachers make effective adaptations in lessons and step in, as required, to support pupils with SEND to learn successfully.

The school's personal, social, health and economic education programme is exceptionally strong. It aims to encourage pupils' awareness and understanding of concepts such as inclusion and pride. Staff arrange many outings to enrich pupils' educational and cultural experiences. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about how these trips support them with their learning. For example, Year 6 pupils were keen to explain what they had learned and remembered following a visit to the RAF Museum as part of their Second World War topic. All pupils have the opportunity to be a leader. These leadership roles are designed to develop pupils' confidence and resilience.

Leaders and staff are committed to giving pupils the best possible start. Dedicated leaders, including governors, help to successfully secure improvements in the school. Governors fully support the school and are closely involved in its work. Staff feel valued, and leaders are considerate and supportive of their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular guidance from school leaders on what they need to do to identify vulnerable pupils. Leaders take suitable steps to protect pupils from risks, including those in their local community. Guidance from external professionals is sought and acted on when needed. Staff are well aware of the individual safeguarding needs of pupils.

Pupils are taught about how to stay safe online, including how to report things that are worrying them. They are taught to behave in a safe and respectful manner.

Leaders work well with other agencies to make sure that pupils are kept safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some of the foundation subjects, the delivery of the curriculum is sometimes not well focused on the knowledge set out in leaders' curriculum thinking. Some activities are not as helpful as they could be in ensuring that pupils build up knowledge step by step and remember their learning in the long term. Leaders should support staff to plan learning which enables pupils to learn more and remember more of the intended curriculum.

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	101296
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10242322
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anahita Milligan
Headteacher	Elizabeth Longworth
Website	www.northsideschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Nursery class has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and members of staff. They also spoke with a representative from the local authority, and met with five governors, including the chair of governors.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art, history and French. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also looked at pupils' learning in some other subjects. Early mathematics was considered in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including leaders' priorities for improvement.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were gathered through discussions, and Ofsted's surveys were considered.

Inspection team

Sahreen Siddiqui, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Diane Rochford	Ofsted Inspector
Rutinderjit Mahil-Pooni	Ofsted Inspector

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