

Inspection of a good school: Knebworth Primary and Nursery School

Swangleys Lane, Knebworth, Hertfordshire SG3 6AA

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 May 2023

Outcome

Knebworth Primary and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Knebworth Primary and Nursery School is a home from home. Everyone is included at this school. Pupils enjoy learning and the opportunities they have in school, visiting museums and historical sites. They listen carefully to their teachers and each other. Pupils know a range of precise and technical vocabulary, which they use to explain their learning.

Pupils know and follow the school values of respect, responsibility and resilience. Pupils recognise that resilience is the key to success, and know that everyone has to work hard to achieve. Pupils are responsible role models. Older children regularly read to younger children, and 'play leaders' make sure the school playground is a safe and happy place. 'Young aspirers' complete challenges at home and at school, building resilience and broadening their experience. Leaders include pupils in decisions about school life, for instance pupils choose the books they share together in class.

Pupils respect each other, and bullying is rare. Pupils know that adults will look after them if there are concerns. Pupils and children behave well across the school, respecting everyone's right to learn.

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

Leaders have set out clear plans for an ambitious curriculum that is well sequenced to build pupils' knowledge and skills. Usually, teachers plan activities that help pupils to build successfully on what they already know so they can understand more complex ideas.

On the whole, staff adapt learning skilfully to make sure pupils can learn in small steps. They use effective checks in class to spot if a pupil understands an idea. As a result, pupils make strong progress.

In a few subjects, some teachers do not always have the expertise to develop the skills and knowledge that pupils need. In such instances, some teachers choose learning

activities that do not help pupils to strengthen their understanding. This means that pupils' learning is less secure, and they do not make as much progress as they could.

In early years, the curriculum prepares children well for their next steps in key stage 1 and beyond. For instance, staff ensure children have the knowledge of shape, space and measures ready for Year 1. Adults encourage the use of appropriate vocabulary and play alongside children to reinforce learning.

Staff make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the same curriculum alongside their classmates. Skilled staff work with pupils with SEND to help reinforce their learning. Staff know the pupils well and make sure that all pupils are supported to make progress in their learning. Thoughtful curriculum adjustments ensure that pupils with SEND are successful.

Pupils love reading. Pupils, encouraged by teachers, enjoy reading a range of different texts. This helps pupils, across the school, learn new words and improve their vocabulary. Pupils begin their reading journey in Nursery, listening to stories and rhymes and recognising the sounds in their environment. At story time, children listen attentively to their teacher, joining in enthusiastically. In Reception, well-trained staff help children to quickly learn to read. They read books matched to the sounds they know, practising their reading knowledge so that they read with growing confidence and understanding. Pupils who fall behind with their reading get effective help to support them to catch up.

Pupils behave well because teachers have high expectations. Positive relationships in the classroom mean that learning is rarely disrupted and that pupils are confident to take risks in their learning and share ideas with each other. Effective support helps those who find behaviour tricky to control their actions and emotions.

Extra-curricular activities are carefully chosen to meet pupils' needs and interests. The personal, social and health education curriculum teaches pupils about topics such as how to keep healthy and safe. Enrichment activities such as the 'pupil parliament' add to this curriculum.

Leaders work together to make effective improvements to the school. Staff appreciate the support leaders provide, and know that leaders take into account their well-being and workload. Teachers enjoy the collaborative approach of working that helps them improve their expertise. Governors, leaders and parents are rightly proud of the school and the difference it makes to pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and look out for the signs that pupils may be at risk from harm. Leaders know their families well and are quick to identify when extra help is needed. Staff are clear about the procedures to report concerns swiftly. Leaders persistently follow up concerns with external agencies to secure the help that is needed for pupils and families. Leaders ensure that pupils are in school and safe. They carry out the appropriate checks

on adults working with pupils. Staff teach pupils about the variety of risks they may encounter.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not have sufficient expertise to implement the curriculum as well as they implement the rest of the curriculum. This means that teachers' assessment of key learning is less secure and, as a result, pupils make less progress. Leaders should ensure all teachers have the subject knowledge and skills to deliver the curriculum effectively and consistently across all subject areas.

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 November 2013.

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	117120
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10284260
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gemma Wood
Headteacher	Natasha Laskey
Website	www.knebworth.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school runs a nursery for children who are three years old.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with a range of curriculum leaders, including the leaders for science and design and technology, across both days of the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with representatives from the governing body.

- The inspector spoke to a range of pupils in lessons, on the playground and around the school.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the school's safeguarding lead. She looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records and spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the 133 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 72 free-text responses. The inspector also considered the 54 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Sally Nutman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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