

Inspection of a good school: Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy

Third Avenue, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9SU

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 May 2023

Outcome

Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils know the adults in school want them to work hard and grow up to be successful. Pupils rise to adults' high expectations. They listen attentively to teachers and take great pride in their work. As a result, current pupils are achieving well across the curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They concentrate in lessons and follow instructions well. Pupils show personal aspiration and determination. They talk enthusiastically about the successes of past pupils who inspire them. Pupils show empathy for others and understand the importance of kindness and respect. Bullying is rare. Consequently, pupils are happy and safe in school.

Pupils enjoy an extensive range of experiences that add to what they learn in class. The many extracurricular clubs include basketball, history and sewing. Pupils vote for the clubs they would like the school to provide. All pupils get the chance to represent the school competitively.

Pupils celebrate their unique talents and their successes in assemblies and performances. Celebrating one another helps to build pupils' self-belief. They also learn leadership skills by taking on duties, for example as 'well-being warriors' and subject ambassadors. All of this prepares pupils well for secondary school and the wider world.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' academic and personal development. Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and pupils live up to these expectations by concentrating in lessons and producing work to a high standard. The curriculum clearly and deliberately sets out the important knowledge and skills that pupils will learn. This is carefully arranged to make sure new knowledge is learned in a sensible order. Pupils

develop rich and detailed knowledge in many subjects.

Leaders prioritise reading. They have put in place a rigorous phonics programme. Teachers apply its clear, consistent approaches to help pupils learn and remember the sounds letters make. Teachers use their regular checks to make sure that pupils get help when they fall behind. Teachers match reading books closely to pupils' phonic knowledge. This ensures that pupils become fluent and confident readers. Beyond the phonics programme, pupils read high-quality texts about people, places and times that broaden their thinking. Pupils enjoy these texts and eagerly complete the reading and writing activities their teachers arrange. Practising reading and writing regularly help pupils to typically achieve well across the curriculum.

Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to revisit knowledge previously learned. They allocate time at the start of lessons to check what pupils remember and provide timely support when pupils forget or do not understand what has been taught. Teachers adapt curriculum plans effectively to make sure that all pupils can gain the knowledge they need.

In the early years, staff provide high-quality care for children. This helps children develop the confidence to try new things. Many children join the early years with communication and language difficulties. They receive catch-up support that continues when they move into Year 1.

Working with external specialists, leaders provide useful guidance and direction for staff about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use this information well to adapt teaching for pupils with SEND. They provide extra help to those pupils who need it. This means pupils with SEND access and benefit from the same well-planned curriculum as others. They achieve well.

Staff ensure that pupils develop strong learning behaviours right from the start. In lessons, pupils are attentive and concentrate fully. Disruption to learning is extremely rare. Outside of lessons, pupils play and socialise well.

Leaders' provision for pupils' personal development is a strength. Leaders ensure that all pupils have opportunities to develop and flourish. Pupils have opportunities to try new things. For example, every pupil learns to play a musical instrument by the time they leave the school. Staff actively promote pupils' physical and emotional health and well-being. Pupils take an active role in supporting others, both in school and in the local community. They are very well prepared for the future.

Leaders recognise that, previously, some pupils' poor attendance meant they missed out on learning. Leaders' focused support is improving attendance. However, a small number of pupils are still absent too often, so they do not benefit from learning the well-planned curriculum as well as they could.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support and consideration they receive from school leaders including how leaders manage staff's workload and well-being.

Governors know the school well. They have high ambitions for pupils' outcomes. Trustees continually review the school's priorities to make sure that they are the right ones.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that background checks are carried out to determine the suitability of adults working at the school. Staff pass on any concerns that they may have about a pupil's welfare quickly. Leaders follow up on any concerns diligently. They ensure that pupils receive personalised support for their emotional health and well-being.

Pupils learn about the risks that they may face as they grow up, including when they are online. They are clear about how to keep safe and how to react if they ever feel vulnerable. Pupils are confident to speak to trusted adults if they have any worries or concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Though attendance is improving strongly, there remains a small number of pupils who are frequently absent from school. This causes gaps in their learning, making it hard for them to achieve their best. Leaders should maintain a rigorous approach to improving all pupils' attendance, as well as putting in place shared approaches for helping pupils to catch up on lessons they missed.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2017.

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	141571
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10268500
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	648
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Wood
Headteacher	Emma Lane
Website	www.northwickpark.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October and 1 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy is part of the Northwick Multi-Academy Trust.
- Leaders currently do not make use of any alternative provisions.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- There are two acting heads of school at this school because the headteacher is also the chief executive officer of the trust.

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.
- Deep dives were carried out in early reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of

pupils read to an adult.

- The lead inspector held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, the acting heads of school, the early years lead, the special educational needs coordinator, several governors and the school's external improvement adviser.
- To further inspect the curriculum, inspectors reviewed curriculum documentation and spoke to leaders and pupils about subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector scrutinised the single central record and reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the local governing body and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in school.
- The lead inspector considered 71 responses, along with 40 free-text comments, to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered 75 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. To gather pupils' views, inspectors spoke to several of them and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during social times.

Inspection team

Bridget Harrison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Shadbolt

Ofsted Inspector

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