

Inspection of a good school: Colindale Primary School

Clovelly Avenue, Colindale, London NW9 6DT

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 July 2023

Outcome

Colindale Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and inclusive school. Staff and pupils value diversity and welcome pupils of all different backgrounds and abilities. Pupils enjoy learning here and are kind and respectful towards one another. Pupils appreciate the wide variety of outdoor spaces and facilities. They have many opportunities to develop in a range of sports, including gymnastics and swimming.

Leaders have high expectations for every pupil and have developed many aspects of the curriculum since the last inspection. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils help and support each other in lessons. During breaktimes, older pupils act as 'Playground Pals' to younger pupils. Pupils learn about their rights and care deeply about the environment. Pupils feel their ideas are listened to and they make valuable contributions to the school through their pupil and eco-councils.

Pupils feel safe here and know they can speak to any adult about their concerns. Staff know their pupils and families well. Families say that staff are kind and caring. They value the additional support provided. Leaders have ensured that parents and carers have access to resources to support their child's learning at home.

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

Leaders have established a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the scope of the national curriculum. Leaders have considered how to sequence learning. In most subjects, there is a clear focus on the key knowledge and skills, including vocabulary, that pupils need to learn. For example, in art, pupils develop their painting techniques with increasing complexity as they move up the school. They learn about a diverse range of artists, who are carefully selected to inspire and ignite pupils' creativity. Many pupils also attend the popular art club.

Curriculum thinking begins in the early years. The school has recently opened the 'Little Rainbows' provision for two- and three-year-olds. In both nursery settings, children

benefit from a calm, caring and stimulating environment. Highly experienced leaders ensure that children develop the knowledge and independence needed to help them transition to Reception, and then to Year 1. For example, in mathematics, leaders ensure Reception children are secure in basic mathematical vocabulary and number bonds before moving up. Those pupils who are not secure are given additional support to catch up.

Curriculum thinking in Years 1 to 6, however, is not yet consistent across all subjects. Some further work is needed to ensure that subject-specific knowledge and vocabulary is clearly identified in each subject.

Teachers and support staff use highly effective questioning during lessons and in smaller group work. They regularly check pupils' understanding and deepen pupils' thinking. Careful thought has been given to ensure that the curriculum reflects the diversity of the school community. For example, in geography, pupils practise their map reading skills to navigate from the UK to other countries around the world, reflecting pupils' heritage.

Pupils make excellent progress in learning to read. Leaders make sure that children get off to a strong start in the Nursery before being introduced to phonics. Pupils enjoy using the actions and rhymes to sound and blend. Pupils who need extra support are quickly identified and supported effectively. Pupils look forward to their daily reading. Leaders carefully select stories that link to other areas of learning, such as science and history. Pupils are encouraged to explore the world through books, including non-fiction books.

The school has provision for pupils with physical disabilities. These pupils are well supported and make good progress alongside their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified. Teachers are given information about how to adapt the curriculum to address pupils' needs. However, this is not used consistently across all classes.

Pupils behave well, learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils are taught that we are all unique and know that our differences are what makes us special. The school is welcoming of families new to the UK and, where needed, pupils are given immediate support to learn English, so they can access the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British Values and know how democracy is enacted in their school.

Staff are well supported and say that leaders prioritise their well-being. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and manage risk as part of personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage in education. For example, pupils are introduced to money and financial management in Year 1. By Year 6, they learn about loans, debt and taxes and how we contribute financially to our society. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests, including after school clubs and trips.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have embedded effective safeguarding procedures. Staff know these and are highly vigilant. They report concerns promptly. Pupils are taught how to report any issues and can also use the 'worry monster' to communicate with trusted adults. Leaders employ staff who help pupils with their well-being and provide additional support to families who need it. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils are well supported. Pupils are aware of the local risks and are taught how to keep themselves safe online and on public transport.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes teachers do not adapt their teaching to enable some pupils with SEND to access the curriculum. This means that these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that staff are trained and supported to adapt their teaching strategies effectively, so that all pupils progress well through the curriculum.
- Some subjects are not as well thought out as others and do not set out the key concepts and vocabulary that pupils should learn with sufficient clarity. This means that in some subjects, pupils do not have sufficient grasp of the key vocabulary needed to access learning. Leaders should ensure that subject-specific knowledge and vocabulary is clearly set out in all subjects, so that it can be embedded and built upon over time.

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 April 2014.

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	101269
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10293215
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	707
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Louise Bowes-Cavanagh
Headteacher	Lucy Rodgers
Website	www.colindale.barnet.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, leaders have opened additional provision for two- and three-year-olds.
- School leaders currently make use of two registered alternative education 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the school governing body. They also spoke with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors considered the curriculum in some other subjects.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and teachers across the school and spoke to safeguarding leaders, including governors. They reviewed records of pre-employment checks and examined safeguarding records and documentation. The responses of pupils, staff and parents to Ofsted's surveys were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Polly Haste, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Karen Jaeggi

Ofsted Inspector

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