

Inspection of Primrose Hill School

Princess Road, London NW1 8JL

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 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 graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. 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 graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

A positive, nurturing atmosphere permeates this school. Pupils feel valued and cared for at Primrose Hill Primary. Staff greet pupils warmly each morning, setting an encouraging tone for the day. This is an inclusive school, where everyone feels welcomed.

A well-considered curriculum, underpinned by the school's aspirational aims, enables pupils to learn and achieve well. The atmosphere within lessons and during social times is purposeful. Staff have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils are well mannered and considerate towards others. Pupils value the outdoor space and the activities that are provided to keep them busy at playtimes.

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and supportive. Pupils know that if they have a worry, they can speak to an adult in school who will help them. Pupils feel happy and are kept safe.

There is a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility. For instance, 'well-being champions' have participated in assemblies and taught lessons about feelings and emotions. Additionally, the 'friendship squad' supports younger peers with activities in the playground. The school has a range of clubs for pupils to join, such as street dancing, fencing and coding. These experiences help pupils to develop their talents and pursue their interests.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. It enables pupils to learn essential knowledge, ideas, and vocabulary. Pupils' learning across subjects is organised in a logical manner. For example, children in early years are introduced to words, such as 'forwards, left', and 'down'. This directional language lays the foundation for what they will learn later on in computing. As they progress, older pupils apply this knowledge to more complex contexts, such as creating 'stop-start animations'.

Overall, the curriculum allows pupils to build up their knowledge securely as they move through the school. For example, in physical education (PE), children in the early years learn how to move in different ways and in various directions. This is then built on effectively in subsequent year groups. By Year 6, pupils can confidently pass a ball in a variety of ways when they play sports, such as basketball.

Leaders are in the process of reviewing the curriculum to ensure that pupils' learning is consistently strong across all areas. In a few subjects, the school has not considered carefully enough what they want pupils to know. This leads to inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is implemented in these subjects. At times, teaching is not focused on the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn. This leads to some gaps in pupils' understanding in these small number of subjects.

Leaders prioritise teaching pupils to read. From early years, children enjoy reading and listening to a rich variety of stories and rhymes. Staff across the school have the skills and expertise to teach phonics effectively. Pupils read books that are matched closely to the sounds that they are learning. Staff swiftly identify and support any pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Pupils are helped to read accurately and fluently. The school has a strong reading culture. Older pupils were particularly keen to express their enjoyment of the 'reading challenges' that they have completed.

The school identifies early on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils receive appropriate support, including through adaptations to teaching. This helps them to access the same curriculum as their peers. The school ensures that pupils benefit from specialist support, including from external agencies. This helps pupils with SEND to develop their confidence and independence. Leaders make sure that the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND provides these pupils with the help they need to achieve well. Staff have the knowledge and expertise to meet these pupils' individual needs.

Behaviour around the school and in the playground is calm and orderly. Staff provide effective support for pupils who need extra help to focus and regulate their behaviour. Leaders have rightly prioritised improving pupils' attendance. They have robust systems in place to address any absences.

Leaders have established a varied programme of experiences to support pupils' wider development. For example, leaders organise visitors to the school and local outings to broaden pupils' understanding of different places and cultures. Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others, for example, by donating to the local food bank and fundraising for charities. They also participate in various sporting competitions, including the London Youth Games.

Leaders have forged strong partnerships with parents and carers and families. Staff, including those at the start of their careers, are proud to work here. They value the opportunities given to them by the school to further develop their professional and leadership skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school has not identified the essential knowledge that pupils need to be taught. There are some inconsistencies in how effectively the delivery of the curriculum supports learning in these subjects. As a result, there

are some gaps in what some pupils know and remember. The school should continue to develop the curriculum in these subjects.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100020
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10255330
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Deborah Isaacs
Headteacher	Liam Frost
Website	www.primrosehill.camden.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 June 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school has a specially resourced provision which opened in 2019. It caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. At the time of this inspection, there were 14 children on roll within this provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with all senior leaders, a range of teaching and support staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing, PE and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for school improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff, including through discussions and Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Karen Kent, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Lockey	Ofsted Inspector
Seamus Gibbons	Ofsted Inspector
Jeff Cole	Ofsted Inspector

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