

Inspection of Barnehurst Junior School

Barnehurst Close, Northumberland Heath, Erith, Kent DA8 3NL

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Louise Shields. The school is part of the Primary First Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andrew Moorhouse, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by William Harwood.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since November 2016. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 21 and 22 September 2022.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Barnehurst Junior receive an exceptional education. They are polite, sensible and considerate of others. Pupils love to read and are proud of their new library. Pupil librarians arrange games and activities and enjoy supporting the younger readers. Pupils work hard, achieve well and are articulate learners. The curriculum is ambitious and prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour across the school is excellent. This is because routines are in place to ensure learning is not disrupted. The school's 'value compass' ensures that the pupils develop resilience, kindness and courage. Bullying is rare. Boys and girls treat each other equally and trust staff to deal swiftly with any issues that may arise. This helps to ensure that pupils feel safe and are kept safe at school.

Pupils access a wide range of enrichment activities that underpin the curriculum and help to foster their talents and interests. For example, pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to learn in the forest school. They benefit from visits and visitors, including Shakespeare workshops, residential trips and outings to the local theatre.

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

Pupils study an aspirational curriculum that matches, and in several places exceeds, what is expected nationally. Leaders have thought very carefully about what they want pupils to know in each subject and have ensured that teachers understand how learning builds over time. This helps pupils to develop a deep and secure understanding in different subjects and tackle more complex learning with confidence. For example, in mathematics, younger pupils practise and embed their knowledge of multiplication tables. This supports older pupils to convert improper fractions to mixed numbers accurately. Similarly, in history, pupils learn about the reasons people have travelled and settled in different lands over time. This helps pupils to explain the concept of empire and to compare the features of the Roman, Viking and British empires. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly identified and well supported to learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

The curriculum is also designed to help pupils make links between different subjects. For example, pupils apply their learning about graphs in mathematics when representing the data they gather in science. Through the curriculum, pupils develop an understanding of important and current issues. For example, pupils have created animations and films depicting the impact of climate change or the cost of living crisis. This further develops pupils' depth of understanding across the subjects they learn and prepares them very well for their transition to secondary school.

Assessment is used effectively to check pupils' understanding. This ensures that any misconceptions are swiftly identified and addressed. The school has prioritised

developing pupils as 'digital leaders'. Pupils readily access learning independently, taking responsibility for developing and refining their work across the curriculum.

The importance of reading is promoted across the school. There is a significant focus on pupils reading with fluency so that they can access the curriculum and enjoy reading for pleasure. Pupils read widely and often. They talk with confidence about their favourite authors and how reading helps them to become better writers. Older pupils read publicly the speeches they are writing for upcoming debates around social media and women in sport. Effective support is in place for those who struggle to read well. Specialised training ensures staff are well placed to help pupils to catch up.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils want to do their best, both in school and in the wider world. There is a high level of engagement in lessons. Low-level disruption is rare. This is because pupils are expected to take turns and listen to others. This ethos creates a positive environment for learning underpinned by mutual respect. Across the school, attendance is high. Effective systems are in place to ensure that pupils attend school each day.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development is exceptional. The 'Power of ME and WE' sets 11 goals for pupils' personal, social and moral character. This is designed to help pupils to develop a strong sense of self, as well as to become responsible global citizens. Pupils learn to challenge themselves, celebrate difference and become digitally aware.

Leaders and those responsible for governance, including trustees, have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's many strengths. They are ambitious and prioritise ensuring that work is focused on doing the best for the pupils and the community. Staff feel well looked after. They feel that leaders have prioritised their well-being and strategies to manage workload effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	140321
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10290246
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	William Harwood
Headteacher	Louise Shields
Website	www.barnehurstfederation.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with Barnehurst Infant School. Both schools are led by the same headteacher.
- The school does not currently 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior and subject leaders. Discussions were also held with the CEO and other representatives of the Primary First Trust and members of the governor partner board.

- 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 carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. To do this, they met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils and looked at samples of their work. The curriculum in other subjects was considered as part of the inspection.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' priorities for improvement.
- The views of staff, pupils and parents and carers were gathered through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sarah Lack, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorraine Slee

Ofsted Inspector

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