

Inspection of Northlands Primary School and Nursery

Winifred Road, Pitsea, Basildon, Essex SS13 3JQ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Ben Figg. This school is part of the Lee Chapel Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sue Jackson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Craig O'Callaghan.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love their school. This is because the school gives them exceptional experiences. Pupils immerse themselves in engaging activities linked to art, poetry, music and a diverse array of books. Pupils take pride in their class assemblies where everyone gets to join in. Many pupils told us how much they enjoy their learning.

A large range of clubs, engaging trips and a curriculum with interesting and engaging lessons mean pupils do things they would not usually do. Leadership roles support pupils to raise money for various charities and local food banks. Each opportunity is carefully planned to broaden pupils' horizons taking them beyond their day-to-day life. Pupils learn about, for instance, different careers and how to be entrepreneurs. The school's high expectations successfully raise pupils' aspirations and aims for the future.

Pupils live by the school's four values of being honest, hardworking, ambitious and respectful. Pupils are kind. They support others who may be more vulnerable than themselves. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes play together well in the extensive outdoor areas. Pupils behave well. Adults sort out any disagreements between pupils quickly. Additionally, high-quality emotional and well-being support gives help to those who may need it.

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

The school's curriculum ensures pupils meet and learn a broad range of subjects. It enables pupils to find something they find interesting and develop a love of learning. In early years, the school regularly reviews the knowledge children need when starting in the school. As a result, children build crucial knowledge in areas such as speech, physical development and number. This provides a solid foundation for future learning as children move into key stage 1.

In most subjects, pupils build their knowledge step-by-step. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make lessons engaging and mostly choose activities that help pupils to build on what they know. Regular checks help staff spot who needs some extra help to stop them from falling behind. Most pupils make good progress through the curriculum and perform well in national tests.

While the curriculum works well for most pupils, there are areas undergoing further change. This is because the knowledge pupils need is not always identified or laid out clearly. This makes it more difficult to build pupils' understanding and harder for pupils to remember what they have learned.

The reading curriculum is a strength. Adults read regularly to children in early years. Children enjoy stories and rhymes. They regularly practise their letter sounds which prepares them well to learn to read. Regular 'big read' lessons help pupils learn the meanings of new words. Most pupils become fluent, confident readers. Effective support is in place for pupils who need extra help with their reading. The books

chosen for the curriculum add value to pupils' wider experiences. Pupils, for instance, can talk about how people should treat each other well, using what they learned by reading the work of Shakespeare.

Pupils are at the centre of the school's work. Staff take time to understand pupils' varied and sometimes complex needs. Staff make effective changes to lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Consequently, pupils with SEND often progress as well as their peers. All pupils participate in the extensive wider curriculum.

Staff's positivity and kindness ensure pupils know that they are cared for. Pupils behave well, and learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils recognise why some pupils find behaviour tricky. Clear behaviour routines ensure staff manage any poor behaviour well. This contributes to a positive learning community.

Leaders have tackled attendance issues head on. Despite this, too many pupils are still absent from school too often. They are missing crucial learning and the exceptional personal development.

The outstanding approach to personal development compliments the well-planned personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. Themed weeks give pupils excellent opportunities to build their understanding of different religions or cultures. Links to local and national businesses enrich pupils' experiences and raise their aspirations about what they can achieve in the future.

The school is regularly and professionally challenged by the trust to ensure that pupils get a high-quality school experience. The school and trust know exactly what is currently working and what they need to do to make it even better. Good-quality staff training and well-being support ensure staff ably support leaders with their vision of exceptional experiences for all pupils.

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 small number of subjects, the key knowledge that pupils should know and remember is not always clearly identified and sometimes muddled with learning activities. This makes it harder for staff to design effective activities that build pupils' knowledge. This then makes it more difficult for pupils to remember what they have learned. The school should ensure that all subjects are well planned and sequenced, and they effectively support pupils' learning.
- Too many pupils still do not attend school as regularly as they should. They are missing crucial learning and the excellent opportunities that the school offers. The

school should work with parents and external agencies to get pupils back into school and attending more frequently.

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	143125
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10345443
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	749
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Craig O'Callaghan
CEO of the trust	Sue Jackson
Headteacher	Ben Figg
Website	www.northlandsprimary.essex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school has provision for two- and three-year-olds.
- The school uses the services of one registered 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, history and art. For each deep dive, 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.

- Inspectors considered curriculum documents and viewed lessons in PSHE.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with those responsible for governance, including the chair of the trust and the chief executive officer.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils both days of inspection. Inspectors spent time with pupils at lunchtimes and breaktimes to observe behaviour and speak to pupils about school life.
- The lead inspector considered the 53 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including 51 free-text responses.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff over both days on inspection. The lead inspector reviewed the school's recent staff survey.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alice Early	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector
Katie Devenport	His Majesty's Inspector

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