

Inspection of Northumberland Heath Primary School

Wheelock Close, Northumberland Heath, Erith, Kent DA8 1JE

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 July 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Dora Indresano. This school is part of the Woodland 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 (CEO), Nav Sanghara, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Osbourne.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Northumberland Heath are happy and settled and enjoy coming to school. Relationships are warm and respectful. Pupils are confident to tell staff about any worries they may have and trust they will be dealt with swiftly. This helps to keep pupils safe. Pupils typically behave well and work hard. This is because they understand the expectations and routines that have been put in place.

Most pupils learn an ambitious and well-designed curriculum. This is enriched by a programme of visits to the theatre, places of religious worship and museums. However, there is variability in how well the curriculum is taught. Some pupils, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not achieve as well as they could, including in national assessments.

Pupils enjoy attending different activities such as multisports, coding and board games club. They make a positive contribution to the local community. For example, the choir has performed at the local care home. Pupils readily take on additional responsibilities such as attendance ambassadors, dinner monitors, play buddies or as members of the junior leadership team. They are rightly proud of their achievements, including the development of 'little libraries' around the school.

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

Following a period of significant change, the school has acted to bring about improvements. It understands what is working well and identifies the right aspects to address. As a result, the school is a well-organised, calm environment for pupils to learn.

The school has prioritised reading. Children in the Nursery enjoy engaging in familiar stories, rhymes and songs. This prepares them well for learning phonics. Staff are well-trained to deliver the school's chosen phonics programme. Books are typically well-matched to the sounds pupils know. This helps pupils to practise the sounds they need to learn in order to read more complex texts. The school accurately identifies pupils who need additional support to read fluently and provides effective help so they can catch up. Across the school, the importance of reading is promoted. For example, pupils and their families participated in a recent bedtime story event. There are also visits to the local library where pupils enjoy taking part in storytelling sessions.

In most subjects, the curriculum matches the breadth and ambition of what is expected nationally. The school has identified what pupils should learn and when. It has sequenced this knowledge so that pupils can return to and embed important ideas before tackling more complex concepts. For example, in art, pupils practise manipulating clay in different ways. This helps them create pots with increasing accuracy and precision.

There is variability in how well the school implements the curriculum. For example, the tasks and activities chosen do not consistently match the ambition of the curriculum. Sometimes, the way in which teaching introduces new ideas lacks accuracy and precision. Similarly, checks on pupils' learning do not sufficiently identify or address misconceptions.

In these instances, pupils struggle to learn the intended curriculum and, over time, do not develop the depth of understanding they need to be ready for the next stage of their education.

The needs of pupils with SEND are swiftly and accurately identified. The advice the school receives from external agencies is used well to ensure that pupils can access the same curriculum as their peers, where this is appropriate. Pupils with communication needs benefit from the school's use of assistive technology. Some pupils need a more bespoke curriculum. In these instances, the school does not use the information it has about pupils' needs to design a well-sequenced curriculum. Consequently, although the school supports pupils' social and emotional needs well, the academic curriculum is not as well thought through. As a result, some pupils with SEND complete activities that do not help them to build their knowledge and understanding effectively. This limits their progress.

Leaders have done much to improve behaviour and attendance. This begins in the early years, where children settle quickly into routines and are encouraged to show kindness to their friends. In lessons, around the school and in the playground, most pupils behave well. They are focused on their learning and get on well with their peers. This is because expectations are clear and typically consistent. The rate of suspensions has decreased significantly. Similarly, leaders work closely with families to address pupils' attendance. This too is improving, most notably for those who have been persistently absent.

Pupils' personal development is well considered. The personal, social and health education curriculum is designed to help pupils to learn important ideas such as staying physically and emotionally healthy, including when online, celebrating diversity and challenging discrimination. The school works closely with different organisations such as local football clubs and the police to provide a rich programme of workshops. Pupils learn to understand important messages about anti-bullying, kindness, physical health, stranger danger and the risks of gang affiliation during these sessions.

Despite a period of significant change, staff, including those at the start of their careers, feel very well-supported to manage their workload. They appreciate leaders' openness and recognise that staff well-being is prioritised.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not implemented with consistent precision. As a result, pupils often do not secure the depth of knowledge and understanding they need to achieve well and be ready for the next stage of their education. The school should ensure that staff implement the curriculum well. This includes ensuring the activities chosen are suitably

ambitious and that assessment is used effectively to identify and address any misconceptions.

- The curriculum for some pupils with SEND is not well-designed. In these instances, pupils complete a range of unconnected activities that do not support them to build their knowledge and understanding over time. The school should ensure that information available about pupils' needs is used to design and implement a curriculum that helps these pupils to learn and remember more.

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	137380
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10379134
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	513
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Osbourne
CEO of the trust	Nav Sanghara
Headteacher	Dora Indresano
Website	www.northumberlandheathprimaryschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in June 2023.
- A deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have joined the school in the last year.
- There has been a new chair of trustees appointed since the previous inspection.
- The number of pupils on roll has declined since the previous inspection.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision for pupils.
- 'Jacquie's Gems @ Northumberland Heath Primary' is a childcare provider that operates from the school site. The provider has its own unique reference number so was not considered as part of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Discussions were held with the senior and subject leaders and a range of staff. Inspectors met with the CEO of the Woodland Academy Trust and a group of trustees, including the chair of the trust board.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for 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 views of pupils, parents and staff were gathered through discussions as well as considering their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Nick Turvey, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Daniel Terry	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Bernard	Ofsted Inspector

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