

Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy

Third Avenue, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9SU

Inspection dates

31 October–1 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders have created a school where pupils are valued, respected and well supported to achieve their best. Staff work well as a team to provide the best education they can for their pupils.
- Children get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception. They are provided with interesting and challenging learning activities and, as a result, make good progress.
- Most groups of pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. However, girls are generally making better progress than boys, especially in reading and writing.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above average in 2017.
- Teaching is typically good across the school. Teachers know their pupils well and plan lessons that are interesting. Overall, teachers make good use of assessment to match the work to pupils' ability, particularly in mathematics and English.
- Attendance has improved and is now close to the national average.
- Safeguarding is given high priority. Pupils feel exceptionally safe and well cared for in school. Parents agree.
- The curriculum makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A range of stimulating topics helps pupils develop a love of learning. Provision for sport and music is especially strong. Pupils and parents appreciate the after-school clubs on offer.
- Support for disadvantaged pupils, and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, is highly effective. As a result, these pupils are thriving and are making good progress.
- Outcomes for pupils in subjects other than mathematics and English are improving and are generally good. However, in some subjects, teachers are not adequately matching the work to the ability of the pupils, or insisting on work being presented neatly.
- Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, they do not sufficiently evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' progress in order to change what they do.
- Governors are not systematic or demanding enough in their approach to monitoring the school's work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make use of the strong practices seen in the delivery of mathematics and English to improve the outcomes in other national curriculum subjects, by making sure that teachers:
 - are more accurate in matching the work to the pupils' levels of ability
 - have the same high expectations of the way pupils present their work.
- Continue to put emphasis on ensuring that the progress and attainment of boys are as good as those of girls in all key stages.
- Develop and strengthen leadership and management practices so they have greater impact on improving standards by:
 - ensuring that leaders thoroughly evaluate the impact of their actions to improve pupils' progress and use their findings to adapt their work
 - governors being more systematic and demanding in their approach to challenging school leaders.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, governors and senior leaders are determined to improve the life chances of the pupils by providing a good standard of education in a supportive, caring environment. Staff are aspirational for the pupils and know them well.
- The headteacher has a clear vision and is very well supported by a strong leadership team and stable teaching staff. Northwick Park is a school where pupils of all abilities are encouraged and supported to achieve their best.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers effectively. They quickly provide help through coaching and training for individual staff or subject areas where a relative weakness is spotted. Teachers, including those new to teaching, are very positive about the quality of training they receive.
- The school has an above-average number of disadvantaged pupils and is using the additional funding to support these pupils appropriately to break down the barriers to their learning. Leaders use most of this funding to provide additional teachers and learning support assistants to help pupils in the classroom, or in one-to-one or small-group teaching sessions.
- Pupils also receive emotional support through the school counsellor and have the opportunity to take part in all school visits and trips. The result is an improvement in attendance for disadvantaged pupils. These pupils are fully integrated into the school and are making the same good progress as their classmates, especially in mathematics and writing.
- The physical education and sport premium funding provides many opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activities from early morning gym trail to yoga lessons and a full range of team games. Lessons are high quality because the funding has been used wisely to train teachers and employ specialist sports coaches. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in competitions against other schools. Pupils enjoy sport and are proud of their achievements.
- Subject leaders carefully monitor the progress of pupils and are taking effective action to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The special educational needs coordinators provide good leadership for this group of pupils. They work tirelessly to ensure that those who have SEN and/or disabilities receive high-quality support and care, and that additional funding is used effectively. As a result, pupils are thriving and achieve well.
- Pupils follow an interesting, broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils enjoy their outdoor learning in the woodland area as they learn skills such as teamworking and problem solving. They have the opportunity to be creative. Music is a real strength in the school and pupils in Year 4 are currently working with the Royal Opera House on the staging of an opera. The after-school choirs are very well attended and many pupils enjoy being in the rock band.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Curriculum topics support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development highly effectively. Pupils learn about

different religions and cultures, and visiting speakers, special learning days and visits all enhance learning. In a Year 6 history lesson, pupils took part in a lively debate on whether we should still commemorate Remembrance Day, where they presented well-thought-out opinions. Reading is promoted through lively and colourful displays around the school. Pupils' achievements are publicly celebrated.

- There is wide range of after-school clubs and activities, for example for archery, science, digital leaders, drawing and gymnastics. These are very well attended by pupils.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They say that they like the 'amazing opportunities provided for pupils', the 'open-door policy' and the 'caring staff'. One parent commented, 'The community is held together by the school and the role the staff make in helping to champion education is remarkable.'
- Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. The actions they take to improve standards in the school are generally well thought out. However, leaders are not thoroughly evaluating the effect of their actions. As a result, they are not adapting their actions early enough so that they are most effective in raising pupils' outcomes.

Governance of the school

- Governors are a committed group. They have a wide range of appropriate skills which they use successfully to review the work of the school. At the time of the inspection, a new chair of governors had recently been appointed.
- Governors oversee aspects of the school's work such as finance, staffing and premises well. They ensure that policies are up to date and carry out regular checks to ensure that safeguarding procedures are being followed. They understand how the pupil premium and physical education and sport funding is spent and the impact these are having on pupils' outcomes.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. They make sure that they receive information on pupils' progress, quality of teaching and attendance from the headteacher. Minutes of meetings indicate that they are asking the right kind of questions, but these are not always challenging or probing enough. Governors are not sufficiently systematic in following up leaders' actions, so improvements are not always checked quickly enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is given high priority in the school. The designated safeguarding lead and deputy are trained to the appropriate level. Staff are trained in the latest guidance, including in the risk of radicalisation, and receive regular updates as required. Staff understand their role in keeping pupils safe and know the procedures they should follow should there be a concern. Leaders make sure that the appropriate checks are carried out on staff before they are allowed to work with pupils.
- Staff know pupils well and are very quick to follow up any concerns they may have

about a pupil's welfare. Records show that concerns are treated seriously and leaders take swift action.

- Parents and staff overwhelmingly agree that pupils are safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers make good use of pupils' progress information in English and mathematics to plan lessons that are usually well matched to the ability of the pupils in their class. Teachers know their pupils well and plan work that is interesting and motivates pupils to learn. Lessons are purposeful and teachers make good use of lesson time. As a result, most groups make good progress.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and are keen to succeed. They take an active part in lesson activities and show high levels of concentration when working in groups and individually.
- Teachers set a variety of challenges and the most able pupils are quickly moved on to the activities that deepen their understanding, skills and knowledge. Work in pupils' exercise books indicates that the most able pupils are making good progress, especially in mathematics.
- Learning support assistants are used well in lessons to support pupils' learning. They have good subject knowledge and understand how to meet the needs of the pupils they are supporting. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils making strong progress in lessons as a result of the support they received.
- Teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding of their work and to deepen pupils' learning. Pupils who have gaps in their understanding receive additional support in the lesson or in short, one-to-one catch-up sessions in the afternoon. Most teachers make sure that pupils move on to the next stage of their learning as soon as they have a good understanding of their work.
- Mathematics teaching is highly effective. Teachers' enthusiasm for the subject is transferred to the pupils, who really enjoy their mathematics lessons. Lessons are well structured, work is interesting and pupils are provided with opportunities to solve problems. Teachers make good use of a range of resources that support pupils with their calculations.
- Reading is well taught. Phonics is taught well and pupils quickly learn to use the letter sounds to read and spell. Teachers choose class reading books that are well matched to the interests and ability of the pupils, but also provide some challenge. Pupils have the opportunity to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books.
- English lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to talk about books and their writing. They are used to reading and talking in front of their classmates and are confident to do so. Inspectors noted that the actions taken to improve standards in writing and understanding of books are improving.
- Homework is correctly focused on improving pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. Pupils are also given the opportunity to complete a creative piece of homework

linked to their class topic.

- Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the standard of teaching.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- There is a strong culture of care within the school and pupils' welfare is a top priority. This is a large school where every child is known as an individual by senior leaders and their class teacher. Pupils in Year 6 are all assigned a mentor to support them in their final year. Adults listen to pupils and provide highly effective support that enables them to overcome academic, social and emotional barriers. This was summed up by a parent who commented, 'The staff know their pupils and respond to their needs swiftly, professionally and show that they truly care about every child.'
- The school is characterised by happy pupils who love coming to school. They play and work well together. Pupils who spoke to inspectors all enjoy school because teachers make learning fun and adults listen to them and help them. Relationships between adults and pupils are respectful and positive throughout the school.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They are very knowledgeable about e-safety. Regular assemblies about aspects of keeping safe in a variety of situations support classroom learning.
- The school works highly effectively with a variety of outside agencies to make sure that pupils receive the support they need. The headteacher goes above and beyond her duties to support parents and carers to get the help they require. Parents value this support.
- Pupils respond well to, and appreciate, the range of responsibilities available to them. These include reading buddies, where older pupils read with key stage 1 pupils, sports leaders, dining hall monitors and being a member of the school council.
- Pupils say that bullying doesn't happen often, but if it does occur, adults deal with it quickly. School records confirm that incidents of bullying and racism are extremely rare. The overwhelming majority of parents and all staff agree that any bullying is dealt with effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is exemplary. They move quickly and quietly around the school and respond immediately when asked to be quiet or follow an instruction. Pupils play and work extremely well together. Pupils and adults show respect for one another.

- Pupils understand right from wrong and the reason for rules. They value the rewards they receive for good behaviour.
- Pupils say that their lessons are very rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. This is because lessons are enjoyable and adults are very good at supporting pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities has been well below average. Leaders have correctly identified this as an area for improvement. The attendance officer works closely with pupils and families to improve attendance. Projects to reduce persistent absence are having a positive effect. As a result, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is quickly improving. Their overall attendance is now close to the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of pupils leaving Year 6 in 2017 having achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. This represents good progress for most groups of pupils.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is strong and in 2017, it was above average for pupils leaving key stage 2. Pupils currently in the school are making good progress in mathematics.
- Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 are also improving. The number of pupils attaining the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017 improved on the previous year, when outcomes were too low.
- The school has focused on improving outcomes for pupils in writing and this is having a positive impact on improving standards across the school. Pupils have the opportunity to write in subjects other than English, enabling them to practise writing for different purposes and to develop their vocabulary. Inspectors saw evidence of high-quality writing when looking through pupils' books.
- As a result of good phonics teaching, the number of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics has increased over the last three years. Most pupils know how to use their phonics skills to read. Lower ability pupils who read to the inspectors used letter sounds to work out unfamiliar or difficult words correctly. The most able pupils in key stage 2 read with fluency and used expression well to bring the story alive.
- Pupils read books that are appropriate to their age and ability level. Most read the required three times a week. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and most enjoy reading as it, 'allows us to use our imagination'. Historically, pupils' progress in reading has not been as strong as progress in writing and mathematics. Evidence in the books of current pupils indicates that progress in reading comprehension is improving in all year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities benefit from the additional support they receive. School progress information and work in pupils' books indicate that most of these pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects.

- Pupils are generally making good progress in subjects other than mathematics and English. Inspectors saw evidence of high-quality work and good progress in music. History work in Year 6 shows that pupils are developing good subject knowledge and using their English skills to produce good-quality writing. However, in some classes and subjects, progress is not as strong because teachers are not matching the work accurately enough to the ability level of pupils. As a result, work is not always as stimulating as it could be. Inspectors noticed that some teachers do not have the same high expectations of pupils' standards of writing or presentation in these subjects.
- The progress of boys is improving over time. However, there is a gap between the progress of boys and girls throughout the school. School progress information shows that this difference is diminishing in Year 6 and leaders recognise that they need to continue to concentrate on improving the progress of boys.

Early years provision

Good

- A large proportion of children enter the early years provision with levels of skill below those typical for their age, especially in speech and language. As a result of accurate assessment and matching learning activities to the needs of the children, most make good or better progress.
- Adults work closely with parents and agencies such as those in healthcare to make sure that children's needs are met. As a result, children are safe, well cared for and happy in Nursery and Reception.
- The ratio of adults to children makes sure that children are well supported with their learning. Children are encouraged to be independent and take risks in their learning. Adults help children learn how to deal with any disagreements they may have. Consequently, children are very well behaved and show consideration for one another.
- The early years area is a calm, vibrant and stimulating learning environment. As a result, children are curious about learning and ask questions. Adults support children's speech and language effectively by clearly pronouncing words and encouraging children to try new words. For example, children were learning the names of dinosaurs such as Tyrannosaurus Rex.
- The outside area has plenty of equipment to support the children's physical and creative development.
- Monitoring is thorough and the early years leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the area. There is a strong drive to improve standards.
- The proportion of children leaving early years having achieved a good level of development has risen over the last three years. In 2017, it met the national average. More girls achieve a good level of development than boys. Despite making changes to the curriculum, the difference between the progress and attainment of boys and girls is not diminishing quickly enough.

School details

Unique reference number	141571
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10037624

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	525
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Richard John
Headteacher	Emma Lane
Telephone number	01268 684554
Website	www.northwickpark.essex.sch.uk
Email address	admin@northwickpark.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium grant is well above average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is below average. Most children are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well above average.
- A higher than average number of pupils enter or leave the school at times other than

the start of the school year.

- The early years provision consists of a Nursery for two-year-olds, where children attend part time, and two full-time Nursery classes and three full-time Reception classes.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for children aged between three and 11 years. A full-time holiday club is run for children aged between two and 11 years, which is open to all local children.
- The school met the 2016 floor standards for primary schools. These are the minimum expectations set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy converted to become an academy on 1 December 2014. When its predecessor school, Northwick Park Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is one of two schools in the Northwick Park Academy Trust.
- The school uses the ARC alternative provision based at Ghyllgrove School in Basildon. There is currently one pupil attending the provision part time.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of information to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in all year groups and talked to pupils about their work. Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books to examine learning and progress during the term. Senior leaders joined inspectors for many of these observations.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, the headteacher, deputy headteachers, the chair of governors, subject leaders, the early years leader, the special educational needs coordinator, a member from the board of trustees and the school's improvement adviser.
- Inspectors talked to two groups of pupils about their reading and listened to them read. They also talked informally to pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and visited an assembly.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's analysis of its own work and its improvement plan, information on pupils' progress, and documents relating to the quality of teaching, staff training, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector considered the 78 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 50 free-text responses.
- The views of the 57 staff who completed questionnaires were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sandra Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Sharon Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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