

Inspection of Northumberland Heath Primary School

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

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to this school and work hard during lessons. The expectations of staff have risen. As a result, pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 2 is now beginning to rise.

Pupils said that bullying sometimes happens, but that they know they can trust staff to deal with it quickly and appropriately. Assemblies and times in class provide opportunities for pupils to discuss how individuals might feel if there were to be any bullying. Pupils know that their actions have consequences.

Pupils behave well. Leaders have put clear systems in place to support behaviour in the school. Treacle, the school's well-being dog, has taken a central role in supporting pupils to consider their behaviour more carefully. Staff have positive relationships with pupils. At lunchtime, pupils are polite and thank staff for their lunches. At playtime, pupils talked about the need for fairness and that everyone in the school has equal access to opportunities in sporting roles.

Pupils, staff and parents and carers spoke about the positive ways that the school has changed over the past two years. Staff said that they feel more valued and that leaders give greater consideration to their work–life balance.

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

Leaders have created a programme of learning that is ambitious. There have been a lot of changes to the leadership of the school and academy trust. The current leadership has changed many aspects of the school's curriculum, matching it more closely to the needs of pupils in the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have appropriate support. Pupils' outcomes at the end of Year 6 have improved in 2019, particularly in writing and mathematics. Leaders need to ensure that this continues.

The programme of learning begins with the local environment as the starting point. Pupils are encouraged to learn more widely about London, the country and then the world beyond. Teachers plan many visits that allow pupils to learn about the wider world, for example learning about the Ancient Egyptians at the Saatchi Gallery.

A love of reading is fostered in the school. Teachers have developed their reading areas in each classroom, making recommendations of books that they have enjoyed reading. Pupils listen to stories read in class by their teachers. Leaders have created a new library, the 'Book Barn', where pupils are able to read books during lunchtime and where parents can read with their children before school. Older pupils were able to discuss books that they had especially enjoyed reading and how they make recommendations to each other.

Leaders are aware that the progress of pupils in reading by the end of Year 6 has been poor for the past three years. Leaders have ensured that staff have received

training to improve the teaching of reading. The impact of this training has led to an improvement in pupils' comprehension skills. The staff have put in place short, focused assessments at the end of each text to check pupils' understanding. Pupils are becoming more confident at comprehending the texts that they have read.

Children in early years get off to a good start with reading. Leaders have created new teaching spaces so that children can work in small, focused groups. Books are closely matched to their phonic knowledge. Children can pronounce words they have not read before, using phonic skills that they have learned. There is a sharp focus on children who fall behind. These children work in small groups with experienced members of staff to close gaps in learning quickly. Families are also supported with before-school 'Family Phonics Fun' sessions, where parents can read with their children, supported by members of staff.

Subject leaders are knowledgeable, skilled and passionate about their subjects. In mathematics, staff are aspirational for most pupils. The programme of learning is designed and sequenced to ensure that all pupils are taught the breadth of the national curriculum. However, teaching does not always allow for the most able pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to answer complex problem-solving and reasoning questions. These groups of pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Teachers assess pupils to find out whether there are any gaps in their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. However, some staff are not using the results of the assessments well enough to address the gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils continue to have gaps in their knowledge. Key vocabulary is displayed throughout the school and pupils use this to support their learning. Leaders across the school support planning so that pupils with SEND are given greater support with their learning.

Leaders encourage pupils to develop personal skills such as tolerance. These are taught in class and through regular assemblies. Pupils post on a display in each classroom when they have seen that one of their peers has displayed this characteristic. Older pupils are especially proud to be part of the school council. Each member of the council has a specific role. They support sporting events, the 'Book Barn' and charity fund-raising.

Staff in early years provide children with a rich curriculum. Teachers provide children with lots of opportunities to develop the language they will need as they progress through the rest of the school. Staff encourage children through games and story-telling. Leaders ensure that children have a growing awareness of the world around them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff are up to date with their training. Staff know how to report concerns about pupils' safety. They use recording systems that enable them to keep close track of any incidents. When referrals have been made to external agencies, leaders have been willing to challenge to ensure that children and families get the support they need.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They are taught about safe behaviours online. Pupils also took part in workshops run by the NSPCC to have a better understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2 are improving. This has not always been the case. Leaders need to ensure that they continue to implement the planned curriculum consistently in reading and mathematics. Teachers must continue to check that pupils' reading comprehension skills improve. In addition, staff must ensure that the most able pupils are provided with more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to answer complex problem-solving and reasoning questions.
- The bespoke curriculum is new. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders have not ensured that all staff are helping pupils to develop their knowledge quickly enough. Leaders must ensure that teachers use the results of their assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding to inform their planning. This will help pupils to know 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137380
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10121643
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	642
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Deborah Absalom
Headteachers	Leanna Rogers Paul Sharpe
Website	www.northumberlandheathprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The chief executive officer joined the Woodland Academy Trust in 2017.
- The chair of the Woodland Academy Trust joined in September 2018.
- The co-headteachers took up their posts in September 2018 and May 2019.
- The early years provision includes Nursery, which children attend on a part-time or full-time basis.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the co-headteachers, deputy headteacher and members of staff. I also met with members of the local authority, the local governing body and members of the academy trust.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, science, physical education and history. For each of these subjects, we held discussions

with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils, and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

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