

Inspection of a good school: New Ash Green Primary School

North Square, New Ash Green, Longfield, Kent DA3 8JT

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 February 2022

Outcome

New Ash Green Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at school. A pupil explained this by saying, 'Nothing bad would happen here.' Pupils enjoy their learning. They talk fondly of memorable experiences such as the re-enactment of historical events. Pupils can explain their current learning clearly. They are excited about future learning plans.

Expectations are high, and pupils rise to these. They work hard, listen to their teachers and are keen to learn. Pupils enjoy challenging themselves through quick quizzes to see what they have remembered or to check their times tables knowledge. They are proud of their knowledge and growing vocabulary. Pupils are keen to answer questions and engage with teachers. They participate fully in their learning.

Pupils behave well. The school is an orderly environment. Pupils respond quickly on the rare occasion that teachers have to remind them of expectations. Pupils describe their school as friendly, and they are confident that this ethos helps to ensure that bullying is not an issue. They explain that 'no one judges or treats people differently'. Pupils say that everyone is nurtured and that if things go wrong 'everyone has the chance to try again'.

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

Leaders and governors continue to work effectively to drive the school forward. Improvement initiatives have been well chosen, and staff have been well trained to deliver them. This has helped the school to go from strength to strength. Staff feel supported. They say that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Everyone works well as a team to provide the very best for the pupils.

Leaders have ensured that all pupils get what they need to learn well. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified. Teachers carefully select supports so that pupils' barriers to learning are addressed. Pupils with SEND thrive and experience success. Leaders ensure that a listening ear is available for all

pupils who need it from time to time, especially since the pandemic. Pupils feel well supported.

Enabling pupils to read, and to love reading, is of central importance. Children get off to a good start in Reception Year because the teaching of phonics is a priority. Children learn their sounds and practise using them regularly. Teachers make sure pupils take home books that closely match the sounds they are learning. This helps pupils feel confident and successful. As pupils move through the school, regular assessment identifies those pupils who need a little extra help. Additional support helps those pupils to catch up quickly. Leaders have rightly developed the teaching of reading across the school. Pupils are systematically taught the skills they need to understand and enjoy a wide range of texts. In weekly library sessions, pupils participate in animated discussions about favourite books and authors. Pupils read widely, often and well.

The curriculum is well designed and ambitious. Subject leaders have set out clearly what pupils need to learn and when they should learn it. They have considered how teachers assess learning across a range of subjects. Teaching sequences are clear and build pupils' knowledge well. In subjects such as mathematics, pupils also build on their knowledge over time. They develop a depth of understanding. This helps them to formulate strategies to solve increasingly complex problems. In the wider curriculum, pupils do not connect their learning as well over time. This means that they do not have the same depth of understanding. For example, pupils have a good knowledge of the time periods they are studying in history. However, they do not connect these to build wider views on overarching themes such as monarchy or empires.

Right from the start of the Reception Year, teachers encourage children to recognise how they demonstrate the school's values of curiosity, resilience, challenge, inspiration, independence and self-motivation. These positive behaviours support learning across the school and help ensure that lessons run smoothly. Low-level disruption is rare. These values underpin all aspects of school life. For example, even the youngest pupils carefully and independently carry their lunch trays back to their classrooms. Older pupils relish taking on a range of responsibilities such as being a friendship ambassador or being part of the eco team.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is high profile. Carefully planned lessons help pupils to make sense of key events in the wider world and to articulate informed viewpoints. Pupils' responses are thoughtful, honest and sensitive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding issues are quickly and clearly identified. Staff use safeguarding systems confidently. They are regularly trained and updated to help spot pupils at risk.

Leaders make sure that pupils who need help and support get what they require to stay safe. Pupils' needs are carefully considered and regularly reviewed. Leaders work with wider agencies and parents to help secure support for pupils.

The curriculum is reviewed, and assemblies are used to help address any patterns or changing needs, including those associated with online safety. Safeguarding is certainly a priority in this school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Insufficient focus on disciplinary knowledge and connecting themes across units of study mean that pupils do not demonstrate a depth of understanding within the wider curriculum. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders continue to get the support they need to further refine the wider curriculum so that it is fully embedded and supports pupils in understanding how the knowledge they acquire fits within wider frameworks of learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012

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.

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	130938
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211484
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Eleanor Hawkins
Headteacher	Caroline Cain
Website	www.new-ash.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes to the school since the previous inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met regularly with senior leaders. Meetings were also held with other school leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector held a meeting with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Deep dives took place in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. She listened to some pupils reading.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record, and appointment procedures. The inspector spoke with staff about their safeguarding training and spoke with pupils about the support they have in understanding how to keep safe.
- Responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff surveys were reviewed. The inspector also considered a letter and an email from parents. Staff met with the inspector to gather their views about the school, including discussions about workload and well-being.
- The inspector completed a tour of the school with pupils and spoke to them during lessons and at other times of the school day.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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