

Inspection of a good school: North Mead Primary Academy

Northfield Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 9DL

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 January 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Ben Burpitt. This school is part of The Mead Educational Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sarah Ridley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Glover.

What is it like to attend this school?

North Mead is a joyful and aspirational primary school. Pupils feel safe and happy. One pupil, typical of many, commented, 'All the teachers are really kind here. They understand what I am feeling. The teachers are fun, and the lessons are fun too.'

The school has high expectations for all pupils to reach their individual potential and achieve well. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. The school has created an ambitious curriculum that reflects the diversity of the school community. Pupils learn about protected characteristics and fundamental British values throughout a range of subjects.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff have consistently high expectations. Pupils engage well in lessons and show high levels of focus towards their studies. Pupils talk about their learning with excitement and pride. A range of support is in place for any pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour. This is highly successful.

During playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils play happily alongside each other. Some pupils are in the 'Kindness Crew'. They check that everyone is happy and has someone to play with or an activity to take part in. Pupils are unfailingly polite and well mannered.

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

Children get off to a strong start in the early years. The nursery provision and the Reception Year classrooms are well resourced, both indoors and outdoors. Children have the opportunity to learn through play. There is a sharp focus on the development of communication and early language. The school has its own speech and language therapist, and staff have access to appropriate training. As a result, adult and child interactions are highly effective. Staff skilfully model new vocabulary and encourage and support children's conversation development.

The school prioritises reading. Those who are learning to read swiftly receive the help they need. Extra phonics sessions are in place, which helps some pupils keep up with the phonics programme and succeed. Reading books are matched effectively to the sounds that pupils are learning. Pupils become confident, fluent readers. They explore a diverse range of authors and genres. They understand these carefully chosen texts well. Teachers read to pupils daily. Pupils enjoy these interactive sessions.

Mathematics lessons provide pupils with the opportunity to develop their fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills. Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to recall previous learning or deepen their thinking. One pupil explained: 'After we finish an activity, we have a reflect question. This recaps what we covered and helps us remember. Then we get to do a deeper challenge.' Staff model new calculations and encourage the use of the right vocabulary effectively.

The wider curriculum is rich and well thought through. There is clear progression mapped out, which shows what pupils should know and be able to do in each year group and each subject. The school has explicitly identified the important knowledge and skills that pupils should learn. Teachers plan in opportunities to check how well pupils can recall their knowledge. This helps pupils to know and remember more of the planned curriculum. Pupils speak about their learning with confidence and enthusiasm.

Pupils' diverse backgrounds are celebrated throughout the curriculum. They have many chances to learn about different cultures, languages and faiths. Pupils value this. As a result, pupils' understanding of the British values of respect and tolerance is well developed and mature.

The 'Removing Barriers Team' makes sure that pupils get the support they need to be happy, safe and able to learn. This team has developed strong links with a range of organisations that can offer pupils and their families extra help. Pupils with SEND are well supported and achieve the best possible outcomes.

Pupils access a wide range of clubs, including knitting and debating. They have the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities, such as becoming a member of the pupil leadership team. The school wants to broaden pupils' horizons. Additional funding is used effectively to provide a wealth of inspirational opportunities. This includes all trips and the school's breakfast club.

The school is well led and managed. Staff feel very well supported by leaders on a professional and personal level. Staff state that they feel 'invested in and appreciated'.

There is a wealth of professional opportunities available for staff. This includes numerous chances to network with colleagues more widely across the trust. Members of the trust board and academy council communicate well. They fully understand and undertake their responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2018.

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	141221
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10313292
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	445
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Glover
CEO	Sarah Ridley
Principal	Ben Burpitt
Website	www.north-tmet.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Mead Educational Trust.
- The school uses a designated specialist provision at another school within the trust as alternative provision for some pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector checked the work pupils had produced, reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with pupils and leaders about several other subjects.
- The inspector met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- 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.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. The inspector met with members of the local advisory board and trust board.
- The inspector met with the director of education and the CEO of the trust.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments, as well as the results of Ofsted's survey for school staff.

Inspection team

Luella Manssen, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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