

Inspection of Woodpecker Hall Primary Academy

Cuckoo Hall Lane, Edmonton, London N9 8DR

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Nicky Ross. This school is part of North Star Community Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Marino Charalambous, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Donald Graham.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and are eager to talk about their positive experiences. Pupils typically learn an ambitious curriculum. They work hard and achieve well, including in national assessments. Pupils understand and exemplify the school's ambition of 'doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do'. This helps to create a calm and orderly atmosphere where pupils feel safe and are kept safe.

Pupils have a voice in their school. They have a range of leadership opportunities and actively contribute to school life. For example, older pupils read with their younger peers. Similarly, the school council has contributed to decisions about the lunchtime menu, as well as the creation of new clubs such as gardening and coding.

Pupils' well-being is carefully considered. For example, pupils look forward to attending 'Dog Club' and spending time with Bella and Teddy, the school dogs. Pupils enjoy representing their school. For example, the netball team and football teams recently won their regional leagues.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum which matches, and in places exceeds, what is expected nationally. Across all subjects, the curriculum is well designed and logically sequenced. Careful thought has been given to what children learn in early years and how they build their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. For example, in mathematics, children in the Nursery are introduced to number and counting through rhymes and stories. By the end of the Reception Year, children are confident in counting in different steps and recognising odd and even numbers. This provides a strong foundation for older pupils to solve increasingly complex calculations, including those involving ratios and fractions.

The curriculum is implemented well in most subjects. Teachers explain new ideas with precision and encourage pupils to draw on their previous learning across a range of subjects. As a result, pupils typically achieve well, including in national assessments. Assessment is used well in most subjects to check what pupils have learned. However, there are areas where this is less effective. In these instances, the most important knowledge pupils need to secure is not checked as carefully. As a result, some misconceptions are not identified or addressed swiftly. This limits the depth of some pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are swiftly identified and well supported. Staff are well trained to make appropriate adaptations to ensure, wherever possible, all pupils access the same ambitious curriculum. Pupils with more complex needs receive high-quality specialist support to access a well-designed curriculum that builds from their individual starting points.

Children's early language is well developed. Staff in early years maximise every opportunity to develop children's vocabulary and extend their learning across each area of learning. Learning to read well is at the heart of Woodpecker Hall. For example, the 'read aloud' initiative promotes the importance of pupils reading for 15 minutes every day at home. Pupils enjoy visiting 'Woody's Hangout', a cosy reading space, to use their token in the book vending machine. This encourages pupils to read widely and often.

Leaders have ensured staff have the appropriate training to deliver the chosen phonics programme effectively. Phonics teaching starts promptly in early years. Staff regularly check pupils' understanding to identify any gaps in knowledge. Effective routines are in place to identify and support those pupils who need help to catch up. Pupils practise reading using books that are closely matched to the sounds that they know. This means that pupils learn to read with fluency and confidence.

Pupils' personal development is exceptional. The curriculum has been carefully designed to help pupils learn about important issues. For example, across the school, all pupils learn about financial literacy. This includes visits and workshops to understand how to manage money and the importance of savings. Pupils access a wide range of additional activities. Those with particular talents in sports and music have the opportunity to further develop their interests.

Pupils behave well and exemplify the school's values. This is because routines are established and well understood. Children in early years quickly learn what is expected of them. This helps to create a respectful, calm and orderly environment across the school. Leaders have effective systems in place to manage attendance. As a result, pupils attend school regularly and on time.

Trust and school leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for further improvement. Staff are proud to work here. They value the support they receive to develop professionally and to manage their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- If a few subjects, assessment is not used precisely to check what pupils have learned. In these instances, some pupils' knowledge and understanding are less secure. The school should ensure that assessment is used consistently to check pupils' understanding and to identify and address misconceptions that arise.

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	136952
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10323371
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	812
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Donald Graham
CEO of the trust	Marino Charalambous
Headteacher	Nicky Ross
Website	www.northstartrust.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school merged with Cuckoo Hall School in 2021. The predecessor school was previously inspected in September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. This inspection confirmed the school continued to be good.
- The school runs before- and after-school provision.
- The Nursery offers provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. They also spoke with a representative of the local authority and met with a range of trustees, including the chair of the trust board.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history, mathematics, physical education and Spanish. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with staff, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation 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 and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sophie Healey-Welch, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Abdul-Hayee Murshad	Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Harding	Ofsted Inspector
Jennifer Bax	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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