

Inspection of a good school: Nantwich Primary Academy

Manor Road, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 5LX

Inspection dates:

30 and 31 January 2024

Outcome

Nantwich Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Susan Spence. This school is part of St Bart's Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Lisa Sarikaya, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Johnny Anderson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Nantwich Primary Academy is a friendly, nurturing and welcoming school. The school has created an atmosphere where pupils, including children in the early years, feel that they belong. Pupils value each other's differences and care for each other well. They feel happy and safe at school.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These expectations are realised in the majority of subjects across the curriculum. Typically, pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

Pupils' consistently positive behaviour contributes to a calm and orderly environment throughout the school. This supports them to learn the curriculum successfully. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to their teachers, and they work hard.

Pupils benefit from a carefully considered wider development offer. As such, by the end of Year 6, pupils leave school as confident, articulate and considerate young people. Older pupils enjoy the numerous opportunities that are available to them to hold positions of responsibility in school. Pupils value the support that they receive to improve their physical and mental health.

Pupils appreciate the various visits that the school provides to enrich their learning. For example, older pupils described their visit to a museum where they learned about local history. Pupils spoke confidently about the risks associated with being online and how to protect themselves. Pupils also learn about how to stay safe near rivers and railway lines in the local area.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that is relevant, ambitious and motivates pupils to achieve their best. Typically, the curriculum supports pupils to build their knowledge in a logical order. However, in a few subjects, the school has not broken down or organised the knowledge that pupils should learn into small enough chunks. This means that some learning does not build successfully on what pupils already know.

The school ensures that teachers receive regular, appropriate training and support. This contributes to their strong subject knowledge. In the main, teachers deliver learning confidently and with clarity. In many subjects, teachers routinely check pupils' understanding. They use this information to adjust learning so that pupils can build a rich body of subject knowledge.

In 2023, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was below the national average. The school, working closely with the trust, has taken decisive action to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. The reshaping of the curriculum has enabled staff to reduce gaps in learning so that current pupils, including children in the early years, achieve well in most areas. However, some teachers have not identified quickly enough where some older pupils still have gaps in their knowledge. From time to time, this hinders how well these pupils learn.

From the early years, staff focus on the development of pupils' vocabulary. This enables pupils, including those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language, to talk confidently about their learning. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoy the subjects that they learn, particularly when they are linked to the local area and its history.

Reading is prioritised across the school. From entry to the school in the Nursery Year, children start to build their knowledge of sounds. Teachers use assessment strategies well to identify where pupils need additional support with reading. This enables pupils to catch up successfully with their peers. Pupils quickly become fluent and confident readers. They read a wide range of different books by different authors. Pupils enjoy reading, and they readily use their reading skills when learning in all subjects.

The school ensures that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Skilled staff provide effective support for pupils with SEND. For example, staff use careful questioning to help pupils to spot their errors and find solutions to problems. Pupils with SEND confidently use resources available to them to support their learning when reading and writing. They are encouraged to become independent learners. This is helping these pupils to progress well through the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. In lessons, pupils focus intently on learning and readily live up to teachers' high expectations. They take pride in their work across the curriculum. Pupils are supportive of each other. They are polite and courteous.

The school is tenacious when dealing with pupils' absence. Staff work closely with parents and carers to support pupils to overcome any barriers to strong attendance and

punctuality. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Most pupils attend school regularly.

The school places pupils' wider development at the heart of what it does. Staff help pupils to develop a strong moral code. Older pupils spoke with confidence about equality, diversity and discrimination. Pupils enjoy learning about other cultures and traditions. Opportunities to cook regularly help pupils to learn about healthy eating.

Staff said that they are well supported by leaders. For example, staff explained that frequent opportunities to work in teams help to reduce their workload. Staff are proud to be members of the school community.

The vast majority of parents said that they are happy with what the school offers their children. They would recommend the school to others.

Well-trained trustees and members of the local governing body know the school and its community well. They monitor the school's work closely and provide appropriate challenge and support. This helps the school to improve further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not organised the knowledge that pupils must learn well enough. This means that, from time to time, learning activities do not build on pupils' previous knowledge consistently well. The school should ensure that the specific knowledge that pupils must learn, and the order in which this content should be taught, is clear enough to teachers.
- The school does not use assessment information well enough to identify some older pupils' misconceptions or gaps in their knowledge. As a result, on occasion, these pupils do not learn as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers are suitably equipped to remedy gaps in older pupils' knowledge before introducing new learning.

Background

When we have judged 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 December 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	142037
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10314046
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Johnny Anderson
CEO of the trust	Lisa Sarikaya
Principal	Susan Spence
Website	nantwichprimaryacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school provision.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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 that 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 inspector met with the principal, the vice-CEO, other trust leaders, members of the local governing committee and members of the board of trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample

of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also discussed some other curriculum areas with subject leaders and pupils, and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including records of meetings from the local governing committee, reports from trust advisers, the school development plan and school policies.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspector considered the views of staff and pupils through meetings, informal discussions and through their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.
- 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.

Inspection team

Keith Pullen, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
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