

Inspection of North Crescent Primary School

North Crescent, Wickford, Essex SS12 9AP

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 April 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	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Sharon Walker. This school is part of the Schools for Every Child 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, Lee Faris, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paula Whittle.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe here. They make valuable contributions to their community, including visiting a care home to entertain the residents and supporting local charities. Pupils follow the school's values of being 'ethical, altruistic and pioneering'. They warmly and knowledgeably celebrate different cultures. For example, they learn about Gypsy, Roma and Traveller lifestyles.

The school expects all pupils to achieve well. Pupils learn an ambitious set of vocabulary in every subject. They are excited when they use and understand these words while learning. Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6.

Pupils care for each other. Older pupils look after the younger ones, making sure they get the help they need at playtimes. Pupils are confident that any concerns they share with their 'worry monsters' will be dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils love learning outdoors. They cook on campfires and build woodland shelters. This develops pupils' confidence and team-building skills. Pupils understand the importance of mutual respect and helping everyone in the community. Discussing the weekly news and reflecting on assemblies helps embed this learning.

Pupils are proud when their parents join them for their graduation ceremonies at the end of Reception and Year 6.

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

The school has significantly improved how the curriculum is taught. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), now learn and achieve well.

The school prioritises teaching pupils to read. The well-sequenced phonics curriculum helps pupils to learn letter sounds quickly. Staff identify pupils who have fallen behind. Staff provide additional teaching to help pupils to catch up. As a result, pupils learn to read with confidence. Older pupils are passionate about reading and read for pleasure daily. Teachers read to pupils frequently. Staff model reading with expression. Pupils enjoy reading a range of high-quality texts.

The school's curriculum is well sequenced. This starts in the early years, where children get off to a wonderful start. In Reception, children develop a strong understanding of language, communication and number. Staff expertly support children with skilful questions and conversations. Children are highly engaged in their activities, showing determination and building positive attitudes.

In lessons across the curriculum, teachers do not always check that every pupil understands exactly what is being taught. When this happens, teachers do not spot and correct misconceptions.

Pupils learn key knowledge for each subject. In the main, they remember what they have learned and achieve well. This is because teachers give pupils regular opportunities to use key vocabulary and subject knowledge. In the past, teaching was less effective. Some pupils still have gaps in their knowledge, which the school is working hard to address successfully.

The school has extremely high expectations for pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt lessons carefully. Consequently, pupils with SEND learn well. Adults anticipate pupils' needs, helping them to manage their emotions. This promotes the school's intention that pupils with SEND should not feel different from their peers as they learn.

Pupils are polite and confident. They open doors for visitors and ask, 'How are you today?' Pupils behave well in lessons. Disruption to learning is rare. Pupils become motivated and resilient learners, focusing on the task at hand. Pupils follow adults' instructions well.

The school works hard to promote good attendance. It checks on the reasons for absence and works to overcome these. Nevertheless, too many pupils miss too much time at school.

The school caters exceptionally well for pupils' personal development. Leaders have carefully planned an exemplary range of additional opportunities. These are available to all, and participation levels are high. Activities weave together to create an impressive offer. Pupils strive for rewards that directly benefit others. They are proud of their leadership roles and talk about their duty to 'serve others'. There are many after-school activities. There is an outdoor learning programme, designed carefully to meet the needs of the community. The school ensures everyone can benefit from what is on offer. Pupils and families highly regard the high-quality pastoral support they receive

The knowledgeable trust and the local school board provide high-quality advice and support for leaders.

Staff are proud to work here. They feel well supported in managing their workload. They value leaders' support for their professional development, advice and encouragement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There have been improvements to the implementation of the curriculum. Some pupils have legacy gaps in their knowledge, and there are inconsistencies in how effectively teachers use assessment in some subjects. This means that

misconceptions are not always addressed as quickly as possible, and some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that assessment is used consistently well to spot misconceptions and adapt teaching and planning so that pupils build the secure understanding of knowledge required to achieve well in all areas of the curriculum.

- Despite the school's conscientious approach to promoting attendance, too many pupils are absent frequently. This impacts on the learning of these pupils. They also miss out on the high-quality opportunities for personal development provided by the school. The school should continue to develop further parents' understanding of the importance of pupils attending school regularly.

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	145049
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10336977
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	167
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paula Whittle
CEO of trust	Lee Faris
Headteacher	Sharon Walker
Website	www.northcrescent.org
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 May 2022 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any off-site providers of alternative education.

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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

Inspectors listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum with leaders and sampled pupils' work in several other subjects.
- Inspectors met with senior staff in the school and the trust, including the chief executive officer and other school leaders, the chair of trustees and other trust members, the chair of the local school board and other governors.
- Inspectors met with other school staff, including teachers and support staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and local school board and trust minutes and reports from external advisers.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school and discussed behaviour with pupils throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also gathered the views of pupils and staff through interviews, surveys and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ceri Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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