



## **SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE**

### **INSPECTION REPORT FOR FOCUS SCHOOL NORTHAMPTON PRIMARY CAMPUS**

**DfE No: 928/6072**

**The key inspection judgements for this school are:**

<b>The quality of education</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' personal development</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership, management and governance</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>

#### **Compliance with the Independent School Standards:**

The school meets the regulatory requirements of schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

#### **Compliance with the Equality Act 2010:**

The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

**Date of inspection: 2 – 3 October 2018**

## **SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

OneSchool Northampton Primary Campus is effective in meeting its stated aims. It provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now outstanding. Pupils enjoy new and regular opportunities for self-directed learning (SDL) and develop effective research skills using information and communication technology (ICT). Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities is outstanding; they receive highly effective individual and group support that enables them to achieve well. Pupils in Year 6 attain broadly in line with expectations for their age in the national tests and assessments for reading, writing and mathematics and, given their different starting points, their progress is outstanding. This is because their teaching and learning support they receive are of high quality. However, such quality of teaching is not yet consistent throughout school; teachers would benefit from increased opportunities to share best practice. Even so, teaching and assessment are good overall and, as a result, the progress made by most pupils, including those who are more able, is good. The staff work very well as a team; they form positive relationships with pupils and ask probing questions to promote their thinking and independent learning. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils are polite and thoughtful of others; they have a strong sense of personal responsibility and a clear understanding of British values. The school's arrangements for safeguarding and ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are outstanding. Similarly, the procedures to ensure the suitability of staff are clear and applied diligently. Leadership and management are outstanding. The leaders' monitoring and evaluation of provision have identified accurately improvements needed in teaching, for example, the inconsistency of feedback to pupils about their work, and its marking. Governance is good; however, the trustees would benefit from a deeper understanding of pupils' baseline assessments and target setting. They work well with school leaders and together they ensure that all the independent school standards (ISS) are met.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

- improve the quality of teaching by providing more opportunities for teachers to observe the outstanding teaching that is in the school so that best practice is shared; and
- improve aspects of teaching identified through the leaders' regular monitoring and evaluation, and ensure the consistency of quality feedback and marking so that all pupils are enabled to improve their work and achieve their full potential.

## **SECTION B: INFORMATION**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:**

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with Section 109(3) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. It follows the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE).

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed lessons; looked at pupils' work; held meetings with pupils, staff, trustees and the Regional Principal; spoke to parents and grandparents; examined the school's website, documentation and records; reviewed parents' and staff responses to questionnaires. The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Mrs Elisabeth Linley
Team inspectors:	Ms Jane Melbourne

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:**

The school is situated in Northampton. It was opened in September 2008 in order to provide education for junior-age children from Brethren families and serves a wide catchment area. About half of the pupils travel in from the west of the school, some from just over the border in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and about a quarter live in the Rushden area; the remainder live in Northampton. The school is a non-selective independent day school for boys and girls aged seven to eleven years. It is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) as a school with special religious character. The school is owned by the registered charity Sceptre Education Trust and is supported by the Focus Learning Trust (FLT). The headteacher of the school is also the headteacher of the OneSchool Dunstable Campus; he is based at Dunstable and visits the Northampton primary campus regularly. The day-to-day running of the Northampton campus, which is a school in its own right, is the responsibility of the Campus Co-ordinator.

There are currently 34 pupils on roll and none have English as an additional language. There are no pupils who have an educational health care (EHC) plan; however, pupils identified with SEN and disabilities receive additional help and support with their learning. There are no pupils who have been specifically identified as able, gifted or talented; however, more able groups of pupils are supported and challenged appropriately.

The school aims to provide a culture where pupils are encouraged to develop their full potential and acquire the discipline of learning how to learn, while upholding Christian teachings and beliefs. The school was last inspected in December 2015 by the School Inspection Service when it met all the independent school standards and provided a good quality of education for pupils.

# **SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

## **1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

### **Pupils' learning and achievement**

Pupils' learning and achievement are good. Their achievement is better where teaching and learning are consistently outstanding. The outcomes of the Year 6 national curriculum tests and assessments in 2018 show that pupils' attainment was broadly in line with national expectations in their reading, writing and mathematics combined, a picture that replicates previous years overall. However, caution must be taken when comparing the outcome of the national tests for such small groups of pupils with the national picture. Nonetheless, pupils' progress overall has shown real improvement since 2016, particularly in mathematics. This is as a result of high quality intervention programmes provided by the learning support assistant and the outstanding teaching of mathematics. Of particular note is the exceptional progress made by the 2018 Year 6 cohort given their relative starting points and learning needs. This accelerated progress in Year 6 is in no small measure due to the high quality of teaching and learning opportunities that pupils receive. This is a positive picture; however, there is more to do to ensure the consistency of such practice throughout school. All pupils are given very good opportunities, through self-directed learning (SDL), to deepen their knowledge and understanding and to apply their learning skills to investigations and problem solving across the curriculum. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they receive for independent learning and make good progress overall. More is being done throughout school to ensure that pupils who have the capability to achieve at a higher standard, in terms of age-related expectations, are successful particularly in their writing. Leaders have ensured, therefore, that challenging targets to this effect have been added to the school improvement plan. Pupils with SEN and disabilities achieve well. This is due to the good and often outstanding progress they make. Their needs are identified quickly and they receive high-quality support and interventions which help them catch up with other pupils, particularly in their reading, writing and mathematics.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Where teaching is at its best the pace of learning is brisk; the challenge set for pupils of all abilities is excellent and opportunities for independent learning are part of the culture of the lesson. All staff work very well as a team. Planning of lessons across the curriculum is clear with expectations shared for pupils to 'orientate, navigate and explore' their learning. The impact is seen in examples of the pupils' unaided writing, completed for assessment purposes, which show how their skills to write at length have improved over time. All staff are highly effective at asking open-ended questions to promote pupils' thinking. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the development of pupils' independent learning skills and, as a result, pupils are adept at using information and communication technology (ICT) to research topics across a range of subjects. This was seen when pupils used the computers to research the making of clay pots in the stone-age and then carefully

recorded their findings in well-written prose or in diagrammatic form. Similarly, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils responded very well to the challenges set for them to work independently and at their own pace. Pupils with SEN and disabilities throughout school benefit from high-quality support to meet their individual needs. The pupils are monitored carefully and resources are provided which help them overcome learning difficulties, for example, with dyslexia friendly software and texts. Pupils are helped to develop strategies to remember their spellings and easier ways to calculate number problems. Staff are highly skilled in boosting pupils' confidence and self-esteem and, as a result, they are prepared to attempt trickier words in their reading or undertake the same challenges as their peers in class. Such provision contributes very well to the pupils' progress over time.

The school's system to assess and track pupils' progress over time is well structured. Assessments are completed in reading, writing and mathematics within a few weeks of the pupils joining school in Year 3 and form the basis from which pupils' progress is tracked and monitored over time. Other assessments are used during the pupils' time in school to provide a termly indicator of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. A robust analysis of data of the Year 6 national curriculum tests is carried out by senior leaders. This provides very helpful information for trustees about the value that has been added to the pupils' achievement over time. Marking of pupils' work and feedback is generally effective; however, this is not consistent across the school. Opportunities are sometimes missed in lessons, for example, to explore pupils' incorrect oral responses as a learning opportunity so that pupils' can improve their understanding and subsequent work. The leaders' regular monitoring of teaching and learning has already identified this development point.

### **The quality of the curriculum**

The curriculum is of an outstanding quality and contributes very well to the pupils' progress and achievement. The school's curriculum is based on the national curriculum. The FLT syllabus provides the basis for curriculum planning. Links are made between the different subjects and teachers work together very well to team-teach across the different year groups where appropriate. Planning to meet the needs of pupils with SEN and disabilities is highly effective. As a result, pupils' individual needs are met very well within lessons, in terms of access to learning and the support they receive. The curriculum ensures that the school's aims are well met and that all pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education as they move on to Year 7 at the Dunstable campus. The curriculum is extended by visits out of school, for example, to Holdenby House when pupils were 'evacuated' from school for the day as part of their topic on the work of the 'Home Front' during World War II. It is also enhanced by visitors to school, such as by local members of parliament. The provision for pupils' SDL has been significant to the curriculum's development since the last inspection. This is enabling pupils to develop their skills in extended-writing across the curriculum. The promotion of enterprise activities features strongly in school and pupils are given excellent opportunities to apply their skills to real-life situations. This is demonstrated very well by the school council who manage their own budget with care. Most of this budget comes from the school's annual Market Day when pupils in Years 5 and 6 source, promote and sell their products at a profit.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The quality of pupils' personal development is outstanding. A particular strength within the school is the encouragement that pupils are given to develop their confidence and self-esteem; this impacts positively on their personal growth as individuals. This is exemplified by the older pupils who support their younger peers very well and articulate how they have personally overcome any learning difficulties or prejudices. Pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities, respond well to the pastoral care and guidance they receive from the dedicated staff team. The team are focussed in helping pupils to become independent learners, through unique self-directed learning tasks and in lessons which encourage them to share their ideas and think for themselves. Pupils are articulate and are able to engage in conversation with adults and explain their reasoning.

The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are provided with ample opportunities for self-reflection; indeed self-assessment of their work is a daily expectation and pupils recognise the benefits of this. Pupils thrive on learning together at times across the age ranges, respecting the strengths of their peers and the necessity to be patient with those who find things more difficult. As a result, their attitude to others, including recognising their differences, is very well developed. Pupils work together sensibly in groups. All pupils have a strong moral code. They have an excellent understanding of what is right and wrong and respect for their school, their faith, and the British law, and they uphold Christian and British values well. Curriculum developments have ensured that pupils have an increasing knowledge of modern British society. Discussions with pupils confirmed their developing understanding of the complexities of the wider society, comprised of many different faiths and cultures, and tolerance of others who are not of their own community.

The quality of pupils' personal, social, health, and economic education is outstanding. There are numerous ways in which they undertake different roles in school, for example, as house leaders, as a school councillor, garden monitor or by joining the recycling team. The pupils enthuse about their planning and execution of special enterprise projects, when they work as teams in a highly effective way and similarly undertake their assigned roles. The pupils take pride in planning how to spend wisely the profit made from such projects for the good of their school and their learning; hence, they make an excellent contribution to school life. In their role to contribute to the local and wider community they hold events to raise money and support organisations such as the Macmillan nurses. This particular event was observed during the inspection and pupils were rightly proud of their achievement in being able to help others in this way.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding overall. The pupils know the school rules and the consequences of any misbehaviour. They are keen to comply and are very well-mannered, so there is a calm and happy atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils value their education and attendance at school is consistently above the national average. Any absence is followed up meticulously and supported very

well by the trustees. Attitudes to learning are very positive and pupils work very well in lessons.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The quality of the provision to safeguard pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding and is viewed as being central to the life of the school. Staff and trustees work together very well to make highly effective arrangements for safeguarding pupils' wellbeing. The school takes its responsibilities very seriously in respect of safeguarding and therefore staff are up-to-date with the very latest legislation and national guidance. The whole school community, including the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), deputy DSL, trustees and, where applicable, volunteers and parents, are well-trained. This ensures there is a collaborative responsibility for keeping children safe, including checking the suitability of visitors to the school.

The school is not complacent about its responsibilities towards radicalisation and extremism. Staff are trained appropriately and procedures are clear should any issues arise. There is a sense of vigilance in staff and trustees who carry out their duties in accordance with national requirements. Through the curriculum and discussions, pupils are aware of the potential dangers beyond the school community and know how to keep themselves safe. Staff keep a watchful eye on any pupils experiencing any difficulties and who could potentially be vulnerable. The use of ICT has increased significantly since the previous inspection. Accordingly, the FLT has raised awareness among staff, pupils and their parents about e-safety and keeping safe when on line. Pupils are adamant that this is monitored most carefully and that they are protected from any inappropriate use of technology; arrangements in this respect are highly effective.

The school places high priority in promoting a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, including cyber-bullying. The school's work to raise awareness among pupils and continually to encourage their good behaviour is equally rigorous. Pupils confirm there are few incidences of being unkind to each other and that, if this occurs, the issue is dealt with effectively within their own peer group and by staff. Pupils know who to turn to if they have any concerns and know these will be taken seriously. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and valued.

Safeguarding policies are robust and documentation is very well maintained, including the requirements of a Single Central Register for all adults connected with the school. Recruitment procedures are secure and all crucial checks, including the vetting of staff, are undertaken with references followed up well before offers of employment are made.

The school's arrangements for securing pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent. All regulations relating to fire precautions are met, with the necessary checks being undertaken at timely intervals. Arrangements for providing medical support to pupils are also in line with requirements, with logs maintained accurately. Trustees actively monitor accidents and incidents to ensure there are no trends which require urgent attention. Risk assessments are a shared responsibility, and are carried out meticulously for activities both on and off site. School staff and trustees monitor the school site well. The attendance and

admissions registers are kept in line with regulatory requirements and contain all of the necessary information.

#### **4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Their impact is evident in the improvements made since the last inspection in terms of the curriculum, the contribution made to the pupils' outstanding personal development, and the outstanding strength and rigour of approach to safeguard pupils. The management of the provision made for pupils with SEN and disabilities is outstanding; lead staff have excellent knowledge and understanding related to helping pupils overcome any barriers to learning. All associated with the leadership team, including the campus administrator and trustees, provide an excellent example for staff and pupils who uphold the school's aims and vision with equal commitment. Senior leaders have a clear view of the strengths of the school and where improvement is still required, for example, in the consistency of feedback to pupils and marking of their work. This underpins the effectiveness of the school's improvement plan to ensure that the ISS are met. Performance management is used very well to support improvement and all staff benefit from a generous amount of high-quality training for their professional development. Induction is thorough and new staff are well equipped to ensure they have sufficient knowledge to protect the pupils in their care.

The school standards for premises and accommodation are met. The school is resourced and maintained very well and the newly designed Hub, a conversion of two classrooms into a dedicated area for SDL, creates an exciting environment for learning. Parents are happy with the school's provision. This was confirmed through the parents' questionnaires and in discussion with parents. A particular feature of their feedback is their positive view on the school's provision for pupils with SEN and disabilities; inspectors agree. The school meets the standard for handling complaints and no formal complaints have been received.

##### **Partnership working**

Partnership working with others is effective. This is demonstrated by the very positive relationship established with the Focus School Dunstable Campus. For example, whole school events are shared with Dunstable's primary department, such as cross country and sports day events. A specialist physical education teacher from Dunstable teaches at the Northampton campus; lessons which pupils confirm they really enjoy. On occasions, pupils read to the Pavilion pre-school in the premises next to the school and the children from the pre-school attend some presentations at school. Partnerships with parents are highly effective as confirmed by them in feedback to inspectors. Parents are provided with a very good range of information about the school, through the website and newsletters, and about their child's progress through reports and meetings with staff. Parents particularly value the new *app* which provides them with regular on-line updates about their children's achievements. Staff at the school also confirm through questionnaires that they value the support and opportunities they receive.

## **Governance**

The quality and effectiveness of the governance of the school are good. The trustees have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and they work together well to ensure that the ISS are met and to take prompt and effective action to address any concerns as and when required. When a trustee takes on a new role, as was the case during the inspection, support is provided to ensure that the transition of responsibility from one trustee to another goes smoothly. There are regular meetings with the headteacher and campus coordinator, and with the regional principal. Such meetings, together with reports, visits to classrooms and other information provided by the school, helps them to hold senior leaders to account. Leaders have identified that trustees would benefit from a deeper understanding of pupils' baseline assessments and target setting; this will enable them to determine more clearly the progress made in reading, writing and mathematics by pupils in all year groups.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Focus School Northampton Primary Campus			
Address of school:	468a Billing Road East, Northampton NN3 3LF			
Telephone number:	01604 633819			
Email address:	Northampton.primary@focus-school.com			
Web address	<a href="http://northamptonprimary.focus-school.com">http://northamptonprimary.focus-school.com</a>			
Proprietor:	Sceptre Education Trust			
Chair of Trustees:	Mr Alvin Clarke			
Head Teacher:	Mr Toby Nutt			
DfE Number	928/6072			
Type of school	Independent school			
Annual fees	Fees charged internally			
Age range of pupils	7-11			
Gender of pupils	Male and female			
Total number on roll	full-time	34	part-time	0
Number of children aged under-5	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of compulsory school age pupils	Boys:	17	Girls:	17
Number of post-compulsory pupils	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of pupils with education, health and care plans	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Type of inspection	Section 109 (3) of the Education and Skills Act 2008			

**This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: [www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk).**