

Inspection of The Norman Church of England Primary School, Northwold

School Lane, Northwold, Thetford, Norfolk IP26 5NB

Inspection dates: 9–10 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to school and they enjoy their lessons. They say that in some lessons, the work can be too easy or too hard. This is because the quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils well and care for them well.

The new headteacher has introduced clear behaviour rules that pupils like and understand. Some pupils do not follow these rules well enough, so there are still disruptions to learning. These disruptions often happen because pupils find it hard to work without adult help. Teachers are getting better at dealing with this poor behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour has improved a lot since last year.

Pupils enjoy the clubs on offer, but they say they would like more. They make good use of the large field at breaktime and lunchtime and usually play well together. There are minor fallings-out, but staff deal with them well.

Pupils say that there is very little bullying. When it does happen, they know that teachers will deal with it well.

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

Leaders have made reading a priority. Pupils are using high-quality books as the starting point for their reading and writing. Most pupils are beginning to love reading, but for some this is not the case. Teachers enjoy sharing books with the class. When they read to the class, it captures pupils' imagination. Younger children learn phonics as soon as they start in Reception. The quality of phonics teaching is not consistent across the different groups. This means that some pupils do not achieve well in reading.

Leaders have high expectations of staff and pupils. They are clear about what they need to do to raise standards in all subjects. Staff agree with the changes that leaders have made. Since the previous inspection, the role of subject leader has been developed. There are now clear plans of what pupils should learn in each year group. However, it is not yet always clear how teachers build on what pupils know from one year to the next. Some subject leaders have not had the opportunity to check how well pupils are doing.

Pupils do not reach the standards expected in English and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Leaders have put actions in place to improve teaching in English and mathematics. It is too early to see the impact of this work.

Pupils understand how democracy works in the country and with their student council. They are disappointed that the student council has not yet met. Pupils are tolerant about other cultures and religions. They enjoy the sports clubs that exist, but say that they would like other interests to be covered too.

Leaders have made many changes to improve behaviour since the start of term. Parents and carers, pupils and staff all say that these are beginning to work. However, there is still too much teaching time lost because of pupils shouting out or drifting off task. Teachers are good at highlighting pupils who are doing the right thing. Some teachers do not challenge the poor behaviour to help pupils make the right choices.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Teachers and support staff present work in many different ways to help these pupils access the curriculum. As a result, they achieve well.

The governing body has been strengthened since the previous inspection. They know what needs to be better in the school. They check that school leaders work on the right priorities and are making a positive difference to pupils' experience of school.

Children in early years are happy and enjoy coming to school. There is a warm relationship between the children and adults. Teachers make good use of the small area, and children enjoy many of the activities. They particularly enjoyed making glitter play dough. Some children are confident to talk about their learning, but they find it hard to remember what they have done that day. Teachers have found it difficult to get the children used to routines. Children find it difficult to follow instruction and are slow to move between activities. This means that learning time is lost.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and know how to deal with any concerns they have. They follow the school's policies and keep accurate records of their concerns.

Leaders are quick to involve other agencies, when necessary, to make sure that pupils get the help they need.

Pupils have a good understanding of the dangers when using the internet. They know which games and websites are safe to use. Pupils are also aware of the dangers outside school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have created an outline curriculum that is at least as good as the national curriculum. Middle leaders need to further develop this so that sequencing of learning between and within year groups is clear. Teachers need to know what the pupils have learned previously and what will come next. This will allow pupils to develop their knowledge and skills over time.

- Teaching varies across the school and within subjects. The planned monitoring by the headteacher needs to be precise in identifying the areas for improvement. The impact of these improvements needs to be monitored.
- Some pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. When not supervised, their learning often stops, and they display poor behaviour. This can sometimes be because they find the work too difficult. Work needs to be matched to pupils' abilities so that they can make progress when working independently.
- Pupils do not achieve well at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and their progress between the two key stages is slow. This is because pupils are not secure in their understanding of mathematics and English. Leaders need to ensure that gaps from prior learning are filled before introducing new work.
- Learning time is lost through low-level disruption. The new behaviour management model is working for many but not for some. Leaders need to ensure that teachers do not allow poor behaviour to continue and use the school's behaviour management systems consistently.
- In early years, children have been slow to settle to daily routines. Adults need to establish routines that help children develop consistently positive attitudes to learning.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	140914
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10110210
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Jacqueline McCamphill
Headteacher	Owen Rhodes
Website	www.trinitypartnership.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 June 2017

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2019 following a year of instability. There was an interim headteacher for the summer term 2019.
- Many of the subject leaders were also new to post in September 2019.
- There have been changes to governing since the previous inspection.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to that in most primary schools. The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors visited all classes and were joined by senior leaders and a representative from the trust.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in 11 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

- Inspectors met with representatives from the trust and the partnership, leaders, governors, parents and teachers. Inspectors looked at the school development plan, a number of school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, in addition to holding discussions with school staff, inspectors considered a range of documentation and records in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils and observed them at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Responses from 19 pupils and seven staff who completed Ofsted's online questionnaires were considered.
- Inspectors paid particular attention to the quality of education in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. In each subject, inspectors visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Nick Templeton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lynsey Holzer

Ofsted Inspector

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