

Hethersett VC Junior School

22 Queen's Road, Hethersett, Norwich, Norfolk NR9 3DB

Inspection dates

24–25 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The high aspirations and dedication of the headteacher are shared by staff and governors. This has led to rapid improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' behaviour and pupils' achievements since the previous inspection.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school and know where to focus improvement. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Governance is effective and governors have improved their understanding of pupils' achievements, especially in aspects related to disadvantaged pupils.
- The stimulating curriculum and wide range of enrichment activities provide high-quality learning opportunities for pupils to extend their sporting, musical and artistic skills.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. Leaders and governors make sure that there are effective safeguarding arrangements in place.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. School leaders prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect.
- Behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is above the national average.
- Standards are improving. In 2016, an above-average proportion of Year 6 pupils met the national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, and the higher standards in reading and mathematics.
- During this academic year most pupils are making good progress from their various starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, especially those who are disadvantaged.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers plan interesting tasks that motivate pupils well in their learning. However, occasionally, when the rate of work slows, pupils do not make the progress that they should.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not always sufficiently challenged so that they consistently reach the higher standards in English and mathematics across the school.
- Senior leaders have developed rigorous and robust monitoring systems to check pupils' learning and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. These systems are less well developed for other subjects.
- Staff, governors, parents and pupils are supportive of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - all lessons move on quickly so that all groups of pupils make consistently good and better progress
 - the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are consistently challenged so that a greater proportion reach the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.

- Ensure that the rigorous systems used by the English and mathematics leaders to monitor pupils' learning and outcomes are replicated for other subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is passionate and ambitious for all pupils in this rapidly improving school. He is well supported by the two assistant headteachers. Together they have developed a friendly school community in which pupils behave and achieve well. Leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The leadership team has good capacity to develop the school further.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching in the school. They regularly monitor the impact on learning and the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics. They support teachers well, improving their subject knowledge and teaching skills. Staff are proud to be part of the school team and work well together.
- Overall, teaching, learning and assessment are good, enabling most pupils to make good progress from their September starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. However, occasionally, where the pace of teaching and learning slows, pupils' progress dips accordingly. Additionally, the most able pupils are not always consistently challenged to enable an even greater proportion to reach the higher standards.
- The stimulating curriculum is a strength of the school and is complemented well by a range of extra-curricular activities. This is demonstrated in the many high-quality displays around the school. Pupils have various opportunities to develop their sporting, musical and artistic skills. During the inspection, pupils performed their dance to music from 'Oliver!' for a dance festival in Norwich. Additionally, all Year 4 pupils were observed playing the violin, and Year 3 pupils took part in a swimming gala in the school's indoor pool. These exciting opportunities enable pupils to enhance their skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff and governors promote qualities such as friendship and tolerance. Inspectors read pupils' caring thoughts on the school's prayer tree. They observed staff and pupils' reflection during a one minute's silence for the victims of the terrorist attack in Manchester. Pupils show empathy for the different beliefs of their friends. They have an age-appropriate understanding of democracy and life in modern Britain. The school is fully committed to providing equal opportunities for all pupils.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. Senior leaders work closely alongside the governor with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils, checking pupils' work and achievements. This focus is ensuring that not only are differences diminishing between disadvantaged pupils and others throughout the school, but in many cases disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than others in reading, writing and mathematics.

- School leaders ensure that the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly. Appropriate support is put in place to enable these pupils to make good progress from their various starting points. Additionally, where pupils have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs, leaders ensure quality teaching, safety and care. The school uses its special educational needs funding effectively.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is spent well to promote sport and physical education within school and through extra-curricular activities. The school also uses the funding to develop staff expertise, to support the sustainability of high-quality teaching and learning in physical education.
- The local authority has guided school leaders and governors effectively when support has been required.
- Pupils' behaviour and their personal development are well led and managed. Procedures to improve attendance are successful and attendance is above the national average and improving over time.
- The vast majority of parents are supportive about the school and the work that leaders do to keep their children happy, safe and well cared for. The view of many parents can be summed up in one response to the online free-text service, 'The school provides a safe, nurturing environment for all children, allowing them to succeed and flourish.'
- The English and mathematics leaders robustly check the quality of teaching, pupils' learning and pupils' achievements in these subjects. Other subject leaders understand the strengths and areas for improvement in their subject areas. However, their monitoring and evaluation systems are less well developed and do not yet provide a clear picture of pupils' learning and progress.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is effective in its work and carries out its statutory duties well. All governors understand their responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding of pupils within the school.
- High expectations are set by governors. They have a detailed and accurate view of the school. They are very knowledgeable about their area of responsibility and monitor this effectively, working closely with the relevant school leader. They oversee the school's effective arrangements for managing performance management, ensuring that any weaknesses are addressed and good teaching is recognised and rewarded.
- Governors now have the skills and understanding to hold school leaders to account for the achievement of all groups of pupils. Through regular visits to the school, governors check and question the information regarding pupils' achievement. Minutes of meetings show that they precisely challenge and question the work of school leaders.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the effect that additional funding, such as the pupil premium funding and the primary physical education and sport grant, has on pupils' progress. They ensure that these funds are used wisely. The special educational needs governor ensures that additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities meets those pupils' needs, to enable them to make good progress from their starting points.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Statutory safeguarding training is in place. All staff and governors have benefited from recent training and are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities.
- Child protection information is recorded effectively. Leaders take prompt action if they have a concern about a child's well-being. The school and the parent support adviser work effectively with external agencies to support the needs of vulnerable pupils.
- Governors ensure that the necessary checks are completed when new members of staff are appointed. The records of these checks meet statutory requirements.
- Effective risk assessments are in place, including those for the recent dance festival and for the swimming lessons in the school's indoor pool.
- Pupils who responded to the pupil questionnaire indicated that they feel safe in school. Inspectors agree that leaders ensure a calm and safe environment for all pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' high expectations and improved subject knowledge are leading to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and the use of assessment, which are good throughout the school. This is helping current pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. Inspection evidence, including the school's assessment records and work in pupils' books, confirms this.
- Teachers plan well for the different needs and abilities of pupils in their class. They provide tasks that interest pupils. The pupils talk positively about their different challenges and how they motivate themselves to move onto the more difficult ones.
- Pupils are becoming resilient learners and participate in lessons well. They form good relationships with adults and their peers. They show positive attitudes to learning and produce a good amount of work. It is only occasionally when teaching and learning slows down that pupils make less progress than they should, especially the most able pupils.
- Well-trained and effectively deployed additional adults respond well to pupils' needs and provide good support for disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are not achieving as well as they should. These adults build up pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to work things out for themselves.
- The teaching of reading across the school is good. Year 6 pupils read with confidence and fluency. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading. Year 6 pupils showed a good understanding of an appropriate class text and could explain why the author had chosen certain vocabulary.

- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills within English tasks and across the curriculum. The new whole-school writing project is enabling pupils to improve their spelling, punctuation, vocabulary choices and sentence structure. Inspectors saw Year 6 pupils confidently using cohesive devices to link paragraphs, and Year 5 pupils writing quality sentences describing magical creatures based on a recent class visit.
- Teachers explain mathematical concepts clearly and accurately. Pupils enjoy real-life tasks which extend their mathematical skills and understanding. Year 3 pupils enthusiastically designed healthy meals with a low sugar count. One excitedly said to an inspector, 'You won't believe how much sugar is in a jelly!' as they completed their calculations. Year 5 pupils carefully budgeted for a trip to a favourite place, calculating the cost of fuel, lunch and souvenirs. Year 6 pupils confidently investigated Archimedean and Fibonacci spirals, including where they can be found.
- Teachers use the school's assessment, marking and feedback policy consistently across the school to support further improvement in pupils' learning.
- Stimulating activities in some subjects support good teaching and learning across the curriculum. Inspectors saw Year 4 pupils displaying high-quality skills when playing cricket under the supervision of the sports coach. Additionally, Year 6 pupils maturely discussed their knowledge and understanding of the dangers of illegal drugs, while Year 3 pupils compared photographs by photographer Cindy Sherman.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are valued and show good attitudes to learning. The vast majority take pride in their work. They show respect to one another and adults.
- Pupils enjoy the positions of responsibility that are provided. For example, Year 6 sports leaders organised effectively a game of rounders for younger pupils during their lunchtime break.
- The school provides a safe environment for pupils. They know who to speak to if they have any concerns. They know adults will listen to them and deal with any incidents effectively. All groups of pupils are well cared for.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe through their awareness of personal and internet safety. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors showed a good understanding of bullying and stated that bullying is rare. Pupils are aware of the school rules and how they help to keep them safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well around school and in lessons. Pupils listen to adults carefully, concentrate well and work hard. This results in a calm, purposeful learning environment. Any poor behaviour is dealt with effectively.
- Evidence in school logs shows that there are few behavioural and racist incidents. In the rare cases identified, staff have taken effective action and recorded information appropriately. Adults support pupils who require additional assistance with behaviour choices well.
- Pupils are polite and very proud of their school. They are pleased to talk about their learning.
- The school's attendance is above the national figure and improving for all groups of pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' standards are improving. At the end of key stage 2, in 2016 the proportion of Year 6 pupils who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was well above the national average. For each individual subject the figure was above the national average. Also, a higher-than-average proportion reached the higher standard in reading and mathematics.
- The progress pupils made from Year 2 to Year 6 in 2016 was broadly in line with national expectations because some pupils did not make sufficient progress over time. However, the school's accurate records for reading, writing and mathematics, and pupils' work in books and on displays, indicate that current pupils are making good progress from their September starting points. This is due to improving teaching and learning across the school. Additionally, a greater proportion in each subject are reaching the expected and higher standards this year.
- The school's exciting curriculum is supporting these academic improvements. Pupils' results in reading are good because pupils read widely and often, and are able to discuss their texts effectively. Writing is improving due to the new whole-school writing project which enables pupils to apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar knowledge to their writing. Pupils are deepening their mathematical thinking as they apply their knowledge to complete real-life projects.
- In 2016, too few Year 6 disadvantaged pupils met national expectations for achievement. However, school leaders have taken rapid action so that targeted support is now diminishing differences in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. In many cases disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are now doing as well as or better than others within the school. Pupil premium funding is used effectively.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their various starting points. This is because individual needs are carefully assessed and pupils are receiving effective support. Leaders ensure that those pupils who have specific barriers to learning are cared for well so that they are ready to learn.

- In 2016, not all of the higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 made sufficient progress to reach the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. As the quality of teaching improves throughout the school, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are making at least good progress, enabling a similar or higher proportion to reach the higher standards in each year group.
- Pupils partake in high-quality teaching and learning opportunities across the curriculum, making good progress in individual lessons. However, assessment systems in subjects other than English and mathematics are not yet fully developed to show robust information on attainment and progress over time.
- Year 6 pupils are being well prepared for their move to secondary school education.

School details

Unique reference number	121042
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10031387

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Mark Banfield
Headteacher	Matthew Parslow-Williams
Telephone number	01603 810 498
Website	www.hethersettvcjunior.co.uk
Email address	office@hethersettjunior.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The junior school is smaller than average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the number of pupils who have education, health and care plans are in line with the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are below the national averages.
- The school met the government's floor standards for 2016. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes and over a range of subjects. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, teachers, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including teachers' planning, the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, information on pupils' attainment and progress, records of behaviour and safety, the monitoring of teaching and management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- A discussion was held with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with pupils during lessons and at breaktimes. The inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- Inspectors considered the 44 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the free-text comments. Views of parents were also informally sought at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the views of 39 pupils and 11 staff who responded to their online surveys.

Inspection team

Julie Harrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ollie Millington

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017