

# The Norman Church of England Primary School, Northwold

School Lane, Northwold, Thetford, Norfolk IP26 5NB

## Inspection dates

21–22 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The progress that pupils make across key stages 1 and 2 is not consistently good. Weaker teaching in key stage 1 means that not all pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2.
- Leaders and managers make regular checks on the quality of teaching, but these are not always followed up swiftly enough to ensure that inconsistencies are fully tackled.
- The good teaching practice that exists in the school is not shared widely enough with staff to help them all improve their teaching.
- Work planned for pupils does not always take into account assessment of what they can do. Consequently, work does not provide the right level of challenge to ensure that all pupils make good progress especially, the most-able.
- Some teachers do not manage the work of their classroom assistants effectively. They also do not check sufficiently how well pupils are learning in lessons in order to address misconceptions quickly.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are too low, especially in writing. Not enough pupils achieve the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school, understand its effectiveness and hold leaders to account. However, they have not been tenacious enough in challenging leaders about pupils' outcomes in key stage 1.
- The leadership structure has recently been strengthened, including that for subject leadership. However, this has not yet ensured that weaknesses in the teaching of English and mathematics in key stage 1 are eradicated.

### The school has the following strengths

- Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have improved due to good teaching in this key stage.
- Early reading skills and phonics are taught well.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school. The majority behave well. Relationships are warm and positive in this caring, nurturing, inclusive school.
- Leaders are ambitious for pupils and have the capacity to bring about further improvement.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact of leaders and governors in order to improve outcomes in key stage 1, by:
  - ensuring that leaders' monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is sharply focused and followed up in a timely manner, so that it is more effective in improving weaker teaching
  - strengthening the role of subject leaders, so that they have more capacity to drive and monitor improvements in their subject areas
  - providing more opportunities to share existing good practice across the school with teachers and teaching assistants
  - implementing plans to strengthen transition arrangements between the early years and key stage 1 to ensure that children are ready for the demands of the key stage 1 curriculum, particularly in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching to consistently good or better across the school, especially in key stage 1, by ensuring that:
  - all teachers use assessment skilfully to plan work that is appropriately challenging for all abilities, particularly the most able
  - adults check on how well pupils are learning, so they can quickly help those who are struggling and offer greater challenge to pupils who are secure in their understanding
  - teachers deploy additional adults effectively so that they support pupils to make good progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. There is inconsistency in the quality of teaching and in pupils' attainment and progress across key stages. Outcomes at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2 were below those seen nationally last year. Although there has been clear improvement this year in key stage 2, the changes in staffing arrangements have impacted on leaders' ability to secure sustained improvements across both key stages.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of where teaching is strongest. They check what is happening through a range of activities, such as lesson observations, scrutiny of work and analysis of tracking information. However, the feedback they give to staff does not always tell them exactly what they need to do to improve. Identified weaknesses are not followed up quickly or robustly enough. Consequently, some inconsistencies have not been tackled with sufficient urgency.
- Middle leaders are keen and enthusiastic, and clear about what needs to be improved. They have some opportunities to make checks on what is happening in school and support other teachers, but these are not regular enough to be fully effective. There is good practice in the school, which is not currently shared widely enough to ensure that all teachers benefit from and learn from this.
- Leaders' plans to drive forward improvements in the school are appropriate. However, these have not impacted fully. A new leadership structure has been put in place across the Trinity Partnership to improve capacity and help to drive sustained improvement, including the recent appointment of an executive deputy headteacher. This new structure has not yet had time to bring about consistent improvement across the Norman School.
- The additional pupil premium funding is used in a range of ways to meet the various needs of those pupils who are disadvantaged, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. A few of these pupils attend a nurture group. Others benefit from individual support and counselling from trained staff in 'the hive'. Both help to address the barriers that some pupils have to their learning and enable them to be more successful when they are in the classroom. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils across the school are making accelerated progress and at a faster rate than their peers, and the use of funding is effective.
- The curriculum provides a range of interesting themes to inspire pupils' learning. It helps them make connections across subject areas and to apply their knowledge and skills learned in English and mathematics to other subjects. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were appropriately focusing on 'where will I go next', while those in Years 3 and 4 had 'you light up my world' as a theme. Year 1 and 2 pupils were learning about all aspects of Africa.
- The curriculum is enhanced through a range of musical and sports activities, trips and visitors. The Norfolk music hub provides opportunities for pupils to learn to play an instrument. Recently, a group of pupils from the school represented Norfolk at an international concert of music education.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in all areas of the school. Displays around the school also reflect the many opportunities pupils have to develop their understanding of British heritage and culture, and to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The primary school physical education and sport premium funding is used well. Pupils are active at play and successful in county competitions. Some funding has supported a teaching assistant to gain a nationally recognised qualification for teaching physical education in primary schools. The school achieved an award for competitive sport in 2015/16. During the inspection, pupils showed enjoyment and a great willingness when participating in sports day.
- Overall, the funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively, although outcomes for these pupils vary, depending on their starting points. A number benefit from attending the nurture group and the specialist support from staff who have undergone designated training to support pupils' emotional well-being.
- Leaders and staff have benefited from challenge and support from the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust. This has helped to develop aspects of leadership and improve capacity for further improvement.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are highly committed to, supportive of, and knowledgeable about the school. They visit frequently and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The governing body are aware of the inconsistencies in pupils' attainment and progress in key stages 1 and 2. They have challenged leaders about these outcomes; however, this has not been rigorous enough to ensure that these inconsistencies have been fully addressed and eradicated.
- Governors understand their statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding, and they ensure that all aspects of this are effective. They check the allocation of the pupil premium funding, special educational needs spending, use of the school sport premium, and the overall impact of this funding.
- The governing body are clear about the link between teachers' pay and performance and ensure that teachers are rewarded for the impact of their work.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous and all checks are recorded carefully.
- The culture of safeguarding in the school is evident. Pupils are well looked after and say they feel safe. All staff have undergone relevant training, including those who are designated leads for safeguarding. All are committed to ensuring pupils' safety and welfare.
- Records show that vulnerable pupils and their families are well supported. Governors

and leaders recognise the need to support the welfare of all pupils and invest in appropriate provision, including training for staff to enable them to counsel and support those pupils who need additional support for their emotional well-being. This is particularly effective for vulnerable pupils and their families.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because they are not consistently good across key stages.
- Some teaching, especially in key stage 1, does not ensure that work is set at the right level of difficulty for pupils because teachers do not use assessment accurately to meet the needs of all pupils. This is particularly the case for the most able. Consequently, pupils' progress over time is not consistently good.
- Staff do not always systematically check on how well pupils are learning. This means that they do not spot or tackle the misconceptions of those who are struggling. Pupils who are secure in their understanding sometimes complete work that is too easy for them and are not moved on quickly enough to more challenging work.
- Where teaching assistants are well managed, there is good support for pupils' learning. However, where learning is weaker, teaching assistants are not used effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils who need additional support. As a result, these pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- There is some strong teaching in the school and this is characterised by high expectations, and excellent preparation and planning, based on accurate assessment of what pupils can do and what they need to do next to move their learning on. This teaching also includes the use of effective resources to support and inspire pupils' learning. Pupils respond enthusiastically and books show that pupils also make good progress over time.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in the early years. Pupils of different ages use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to good effect when trying to pronounce unfamiliar words. Reading areas in all classrooms promote reading effectively.
- Most classrooms are bright and colourful and include a range of displays to support pupils' learning and also to challenge them and celebrate their learning. Most teachers use visual imagery and apparatus well to capture pupils' interest and promote their understanding. They plan interesting topics and learning experiences that engage pupils' interests and stimulate their curiosity.

**Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school provides a caring, nurturing and inclusive environment, where pupils develop good levels of self-confidence. Most have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to achieve. Pupils know that perseverance and resilience will help them to learn well.
- The work of the nurture unit and 'the hive' is appreciated by pupils, staff and parents. A small minority of pupils who struggle to regulate their own behaviour within the normal classroom environment benefit from learning in the nurture unit. Trained staff also support the emotional welfare of a small number of individual pupils. This includes those who have suffered bereavement, family break-down and illness. This helps these pupils with their learning.
- Pupils take on responsibilities enthusiastically and enjoy contributing to school life. For example, those in Year 6 lead their family and house groups. They also facilitate school council meetings and assist with collective worship.
- Pupils are confident that they are kept safe. They learn how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways, including when using the internet and social media. A few parents raised concerns over bullying; however, inspection evidence did not support this. Pupils spoken with were adamant that bullying is very rare and that, if it does happen, adults deal with it effectively.

**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that behaviour has improved since the new behaviour management system has been put in place. Pupils enjoy the new system which allows them to earn rewards for good behaviour and redeem these for hot chocolate on Fridays.
- The school values are well developed and shared by all. They underpin expectations for behaviour and are consistently and positively promoted by teachers and staff.
- Around school, pupils are polite and courteous to visitors, as well as to each other and staff. In lessons, most pupils enjoy the opportunities they are given to work together, collaborating well and showing mutual respect for each other. Relationships are very positive.
- In a small number of lessons, where work is not well matched to their needs, some pupils disengage and do not sustain their concentration. A small minority of pupils who display poor learning behaviours are supported within the nurture unit.
- Attendance is improving and is broadly average overall. The attendance of a very few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who are disadvantaged, remains slightly below average. However, procedures to encourage regular attendance are rigorous and include strong action and the use of external support to help pupils back into school. The importance of regular attendance is

promoted through school displays, newsletters, rewards and the school website.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because there are inconsistencies in rates of progress for groups of pupils in different key stages and subject areas over time. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have not led to good progress for all pupils.
- In 2016, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were well below those seen nationally. The progress that pupils made in mathematics from the end of key stage 1 was significantly below that expected and in the lowest 10% nationally. Some most-able pupils made good progress in writing and a higher proportion of pupils exceeded age-related expectations in writing than average.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics were also below average and pupils did not make good progress from the end of the early years. Too few pupils were assessed as working at greater depth in any of these subjects.
- Leaders have implemented a range of actions to address these shortfalls. This includes training for individual teachers, new appointments and support for subject leaders to help them carry out their roles more effectively.
- These actions have had a good impact in key stage 2, where stronger teaching is enabling pupils to make better progress now. There are examples of high-quality writing for some pupils, with good development of mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. However, these improvements are not consistent across both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- School assessment information indicates that current Year 6 pupils are set to attain much higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics this year. This is supported by the scrutiny of pupils' books and work undertaken during the inspection.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in key stage 1 has not improved enough. School assessment information indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics, although improving, are still below average. Work in pupils' books reflects this.
- Analysis of books and school tracking information shows that most disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making accelerated progress.
- In the early years and key stage 2, teachers plan appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils. This includes those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the teachers also deploy their teaching assistants well. This enables these pupils to make good progress. However, this is not consistently the case in key stage 1.
- Pupils make good progress in acquiring early reading skills. The proportion of pupils passing the phonics screening check in 2016 was above that seen nationally in 2016. This cohort included 14 pupils. The current Year 1 cohort has only seven pupils and outcomes overall are slightly below the national figure due to the impact of these small numbers.

## Early years provision

Good

- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. They are confident, inquisitive learners, who are happy and keen to talk about their work.
- Children enter the Reception Year with skills and abilities that are similar to those of other children nationally. The proportion who reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year improved in 2016 from being broadly in line with, to being above that seen nationally. From the assessments already confirmed, this is set to be maintained in 2017, representing good progress from children's typical starting points.
- Teachers plan carefully and use assessment information well. They provide an effective blend of staff-led and child-initiated activities which ensure that children make good progress.
- The indoor and outdoor environments are orderly and well resourced. Children are excited to learn. They delighted in preparing meals with real food in the home role play area. Others were engrossed in playing 'schools' and taking on the role of the teacher.
- There is clear evidence of development in children's independent writing over the year. However, there is less evidence of more sustained writing. Leaders have identified that they need to ensure that children are better prepared for the demands of the key stage 1 curriculum, in order to improve their progress and attainment, especially in writing by the end of key stage 1. They have rightly prioritised that improving transition between these two stages is an area for development.
- Detailed electronic learning journeys enable parents to contribute to their child's learning. These include all aspects of children's learning, including their visits and trips, for example to the seaside.
- All the appropriate welfare and safety requirements are met in the early years. Children are happy, confident and well behaved. They learn to play and work happily together.



## School details

Unique reference number	140914
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10031320

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Ann Pope
Executive headteacher	Carole Reich
Telephone number	01366728241
Website	<a href="http://www.trinitypartnership.norfolk.sch.uk">www.trinitypartnership.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@norman-pri.norfolk.sch.uk">head@norman-pri.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in 2016.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an

education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.

- The proportions of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language are below the national averages. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes across the school, other than in the Reception Year.
- On 1 July 2014, the school joined the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust. In September 2015, the headteacher became the executive headteacher of the Trinity Partnership with the Duchy of Lancaster School and Weeting School within the trust. An internal appointment was made to the role of head of school.
- There have been many changes in staffing over the last year. This includes the resignation of the head of school at Easter this year.
- The school has suffered from financial instability due to fluctuating numbers of pupils on roll.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in every class across the school. Observations were made jointly with the executive headteacher.
- During observations, the inspector took account of pupils' work in books. A detailed scrutiny of the work of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 was also undertaken.
- On day 1 of the inspection, no lessons were seen as all pupils and staff were involved in sports day activities.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils and also spoke with pupils throughout the inspection, including when they were participating in sports day.
- Meetings were held with leaders, including subject leaders. The inspector also met with two governors from the local governing body and a representative from the academy trust.
- The inspector considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, its development plan, and information about pupils' attainment and progress. She also looked at information relating to behaviour and bullying, attendance records and all aspects of safeguarding. Reports from trust reviews were also scrutinised.
- The inspector took account of the following responses to surveys: none from pupils; nine from members of staff; and 16 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. The inspector also reviewed nine responses to Ofsted's free-text service. The inspector spoke with parents who were having lunch with their children and those who were attending sports day. She also spoke with parents who were delivering their children to school.

## Inspection team

Joan Beale, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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