

Horsford CofE VA Primary School

Mill Lane, Horsford, Norwich, Norfolk NR10 3ES

Inspection dates

6–7 June 2018

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a rapidly improving school. Senior leaders and the Nebula Federation have been successful in improving teaching and pupil achievement.
- The quality of the school's self-evaluation is strong. Leaders know where the strengths of the school lie and where continuing improvements need to be made.
- Governors are well informed and have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and challenge leaders to make it even better.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well across the school. They have done particularly well with reading and receive a good level of support.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving. Teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable for pupils; teaching assistants support pupils very well.
- The curriculum, including additional activities, provides pupils with a broad range of learning experiences that engage pupils' interest and ensure that they make progress in a wide range of subjects. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain and for their next stage in education.
- The quality of education within the early years is good. Effective leadership and teaching ensure that pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils are polite and courteous; they welcome visitors and they support each other well around the school.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and work well together in classrooms.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. The school's highly effective procedures ensure that pupils are safe.
- The partnership with parents is developing, with a range of opportunities to involve them in their child's learning.
- Some teachers' planning is not effective enough because activities do not challenge all pupils sufficiently well, particularly the most able.
- Despite success at the end of key stage 1, progress in key stage 2 has been insufficient to attain higher standards in Year 6.
- A large proportion of pupils do not attend school often enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment for all pupils in reading, writing, mathematics and across the curriculum by ensuring that teachers:
 - challenge the most able pupils so that more achieve higher standards
 - use questioning more effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Improve attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism by:
 - challenging and supporting parents to make sure that their children are in school more often, especially by clamping down on term-time holidays.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher, alongside her extended leadership team and the Nebula Federation, has developed a vision which sets clear and high expectations of staff and pupils. There is a positive, reflective, forward-looking culture in the school.
- The leadership team are determined and have a relentless focus on achieving high standards. This approach has developed rapidly since the opening of Horsford Primary School in 2015.
- The leadership team knows the school's strengths and areas for development well. Leaders have rigorous systems to check on the quality of teaching and monitor the progress that pupils make. Information from these checks is reported accurately to governors and used to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Leaders invite scrutiny from external consultants, which adds to the school's accurate understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- The programme of staff development is effective. Partnership working across the Nebula Federation is valued by staff, including the sharing of effective practice and action research. Training plans and regular mentoring support the development of new teachers and those who need to improve their performance further.
- Any underperformance is rigorously tackled; staff respond well to this challenge and support. Teachers report that the training offered by the school and the Nebula Federation has improved their teaching.
- Teachers' performance management is robust. Leaders have linked challenging targets for individual teachers to school improvement objectives and provided appropriate training and support to help all teachers reach their targets. Governors understand the system well.
- Leaders have implemented an ambitious curriculum, their 'enquiry curriculum'. The school's curriculum beyond English and mathematics is suitably broad and balanced. There is good coverage of a wide range of subjects that interest and excite pupils and are studied in detail. A range of curriculum activities are provided so that pupils can develop a good understanding of life in modern Britain. These include teaching pupils to value different cultures and understand the role of democracy in Britain.
- The pupil-premium funding is used very well to support disadvantaged pupils, and leaders regularly review the impact of this support. Leaders have high expectations of what disadvantaged pupils can achieve and, as a result, the progress made by these pupils matches closely the progress made by others from similar starting points.
- Similarly, the primary physical education and sport premium is spent effectively. Leaders and governors have a clear plan for how the money should be spent and what the impact should be. This ensures that pupils maintain healthy active lifestyles and supports more pupils in taking part in extra-curricular activities and inter-school competitions.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is well led and funding for this group of pupils is used effectively. The executive deputy headteacher with responsibility for SEN across the Nebula Federation, alongside the

school special educational needs coordinator, supports learning across the school well so that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Intervention strategies have a positive impact on these pupils' progress.

- The school promotes the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills effectively. Pupils understand the school values well and how these apply to their community and wider Britain. They are taught to value difference and develop moral values.
- Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are a strength of the school. There is a wide range of clubs that pupils can attend.
- Leaders engage well with parents and carers. For example, parents and pupils are invited to attend mentoring sessions so that parents are aware of how well their child is progressing. Nearly all parents are positive about the school and its leadership.

Governance of the school

- Governors play a supportive and appropriately challenging role in the school's success.
- Governors' monitoring of school improvement is thorough: they record the outcomes of monitoring visits, including areas for further improvement, for example attendance and communication with parents.
- Governors regularly check on safeguarding arrangements.
- Governors' monitoring of the schools' performance management system is effective. They ensure that good value for money is obtained. Governors ensure that the performance management of the headteacher is appropriately challenging.
- Governors attend a wide variety of training courses which strengthen their skills.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's culture is focused on making Horsford Primary School a safe place to be. Pupils say that they feel safe and are taught how to keep safe online. They know who they can talk to if they have a problem.
- Parents are invited to attend information sessions to support their child staying safe while using social media or using the internet.
- Staff are trained well and are vigilant in checking that pupils feel safe and are well looked after. The system for reporting concerns is well managed and all staff know whom they should contact if they need to report any issues. Safeguarding referrals to local authorities and other appropriate agencies are made appropriately and followed up.
- Checks on the statutory requirements and procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are carried out effectively by the school's safeguarding lead.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the opening of

the amalgamated school due to regular monitoring and evaluation, which identify the strengths and weaknesses in practice. Targeted training and coaching are then used to enable staff to improve their practice.

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge. As a result, they are confident refining learning plans to meet pupils' needs. For example, Year 3 pupils revisited drawing two-dimensional shapes accurately so that they could then recognise lines of symmetry.
- Teachers accurately assess pupils and use this information to plan a wide range of learning activities that are matched to most pupils' needs, although sometimes the most able pupils are not challenged enough.
- The teaching of reading skills is good. In early years, children make a good start with their early development of reading because of effective teaching, an encouraging environment and effective links with parents. The teaching of phonics in the early years is strong, with more pupils developing at an appropriate level. Good teaching in key stage 2 ensures that the progress pupils make in reading is broadly in line with national averages for all groups of pupils. The school libraries are inviting and well used.
- Year 6 pupils say they enjoy their mathematics lessons and that 'the teachers have taught us all they can: it's up to us whether we use it or not'. There are some strengths in the teaching of mathematics. These include: the good subject knowledge of teachers; effective planning of activities for pupils; availability of appropriate resources; high expectations of what pupils can achieve; and the opportunity to develop resilience in mathematical learning by encouraging pupils to tackle difficult problems.
- Pupils are regularly given the opportunity to apply well-developed arithmetic skills to tackle tricky problems and to develop mathematical reasoning. For example, in Years 5, pupils were able to solve a range of 'murder mystery' challenges using their good knowledge of angles and properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. In Year 2, pupils were confident mathematicians, tackling problems with sequencing numbers.
- Teaching assistants are used very well; they are well directed by teachers and support pupils effectively through modelling and checking that individual pupils understand what they need to do. For example, in Year 4, the assistant checked that pupils understood how to plan a journey using timetables.
- Teachers set appropriate homework, which helps pupils improve their mathematics skills, research and independent writing. Information on the school's website encourages parents to support their child at home with their learning. Pupils say that they enjoy the problems set out around the school, for example the 'countdown' challenge. The school offers additional support through its homework club.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have a good understanding of the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They set appropriate targets and provide high-quality support to ensure that these pupils make good progress.
- Classrooms are purposeful and present a positive learning environment. The relationships between teachers and pupils are productive and respectful. Teachers use the school's well-thought-out behaviour policy to keep pupils on track.
- Not all teachers are effective with their use of questioning to help pupils gain the knowledge and understanding required. On occasion, some misconceptions are not discussed with pupils and not addressed quickly to move learning on.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good
- Throughout the school, pupils are polite, courteous, friendly and welcoming. They show high levels of respect, opening doors for one another and adults. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- Incidents of bullying are rare, and the school has clear systems to deal with any incidents effectively. Pupils trust staff to deal with any incidents quickly.
- Pupils show high levels of enthusiasm for their work and have good levels of resilience when solving problems. They are proud of their work. Pupils learn to talk about and manage their feelings well. Pupils can sensibly resolve minor disputes between each other; consequently, lessons are not disrupted often.
- Pupils listen thoughtfully to others' contributions in lessons. This was particularly evident in science in Years 3 and 4, as they explored which part of a plant made it smell, and in Years 5 and 6, when they explored what it might have been like living in 15th-century Africa.
- During the service, led by the Bishop of Norwich, to celebrate the school's Mill Lane site 40th anniversary, pupils showed positive attitudes, listened attentively and were respectful and supportive of each other.
- The school is effective in encouraging pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. The strong emphasis on physical education and the wide range of after-school and lunchtime activities have a positive effect on their health and fitness.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good
- Pupils support one another and work well together. This was particularly evident during break and lunchtimes.
- The school's approach to behaviour is 'owned' by pupils and, as a result, both highly valued and followed by pupils. They enjoy receiving house points.
- There is some low-level 'off-task' behaviour; however, this is managed well by teachers using the school's policy and practices. Pupils understand this system and respond well.
- The behaviour of the very few pupils who have issues is managed well. A small number of parents raised concerns about incidents, but the overwhelming majority of parents responding to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, believe that the school ensures that pupils are well behaved.
- Attendance is not yet good enough. However, school processes for monitoring are strong and staff use a range of appropriate strategies both to reward and encourage attendance and to challenge absence. Still, a number of parents persist in removing their children from school for a holiday during term time.
- Pupils arrive at school on time and are not late for lessons.

- There have been no exclusions since the school became part of the Nebula Federation.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are being strengthened by strong and inspiring leadership, which has led to improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Current school assessment information convincingly indicates that the progress of current pupils is good across reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.
- In Year 1, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check is improving due to a more systematic approach, good-quality teaching and increased targeted support for pupils who need additional help.
- By the end of Year 2, in 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with the national average.
- Standards by the end of key stage 2 were low, due to the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding from a legacy of previously inadequate teaching. However, current pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders and teachers are working together to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged so that they can make the best possible progress. Although improving, the progress of the most able pupils is not strong enough.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress throughout the school. Good systems support these pupils. Teachers have high expectations of them, plan work carefully and provide additional support where it is needed, so that disadvantaged pupils usually achieve as well as other pupils in school.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress, because planning for their needs is detailed and thorough. Strong leadership ensures that expectations of pupils' progress are high. A wide range of support is matched well to pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils read frequently and confidently. Pupils in key stage 1 talked enthusiastically about their books when reading to the inspector. A structured approach to reading has been adopted throughout the school, and this leads to good progress. Pupils apply their phonic skills well when reading words that they do not recognise immediately. Older pupils choose a wide range of challenging books. Regular guided reading has contributed well to pupils' love of reading and ability to understand a range of texts, making appropriate predictions and deductions.
- Progress in a range of other subjects is good. Opportunities are given to pupils to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding in a variety of themes that interest and excite them, for example through exploring the slave trade.

Early years provision

Good

- The proportion of children, including disadvantaged children, who reach a good level of development has risen over the last two years and is broadly in line with the national average.
- Children enter the early years with skills that are well below those typical for their age,

as reflected in their 'learning journeys'. However, children make good progress. The school's induction process for new children is thorough, involving parents in a number of activities. One parent stated, 'I am so happy about the way she settled; I have since recommended the school to two other families.'

- The early years is managed effectively so that children have a good start to their education in the Reception class. Almost all children are prepared well for Year 1.
- Parents can attend a range of sessions, which provide information about different aspects of learning. A recent 'stay and play' session included an overview of phonics teaching, providing parents with strategies to support their child at home.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is strong. As a result of the carefully planned activities, both in class and outside, children have many and varied opportunities to write. They use words that are phonetically plausible such as 'poot'.
- Children know their routines well and are interested, enthusiastic learners.
- Detailed records are kept of children's achievements and their next steps in learning. These are used to provide the children with support so that they can continue to improve their skills. Staff are skilful at modelling and encouraging children to talk about their learning.
- Children are well behaved, maintain good levels of concentration and listen to each other. During the inspection, they behaved well throughout the impromptu visit from the Bishop of Norwich, managing the change to their normal routine. They are kind to one another, take turns and share the equipment well.
- The school provides a safe and caring learning environment. Teachers and support staff know the children well and can talk confidently about individuals' strengths and next steps.
- Detailed and effective plans support children who need additional support. This is often in the areas of social and communication skills.
- Leadership of the early years is strong. Leaders employ innovative ideas, to adapt teaching and learning activities and approaches to meet the additional needs of individual children.

School details

Unique reference number	141991
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10046612

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Leggett
Executive Headteacher	Ashley Best-White
Telephone number	01603 897938
Website	www.horsfordprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	office@horsfordjunior.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school amalgamated with the local infant school and in September 2015 opened as Horsford Primary School. It is part of the Nebula Federation, a partnership of six local primary schools.
- The Nebula Federation single governing body is responsible for governance and statutory responsibilities.
- The school benefits from the wider support the Nebula Federation can offer.
- The school is slightly larger than similar primary schools.
- The great majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds, with very few from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those with an education, health and care plan, is above average.

- The school meets current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons, some with one of the school's senior leaders, and in two intervention activities. They carried out additional learning walks.
- The team held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, a newly qualified teacher, a recently trained teacher and five representatives of the governing body. Inspectors had informal conversations with pupils in lessons and at social times. Inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at: safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures; self-evaluation and improvement planning; monitoring reports and minutes of meetings from the governing body; external consultants' reports; assessment information; records of pupils' attendance; and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books in lessons and a sample of books belonging to pupils in both key stages.
- They took account of 29 free texts sent by parents and carers during the inspection, 55 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered 20 responses from staff.

Inspection team

Sally Garrett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jeremy Rowe	Ofsted Inspector
Gay Whent	Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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