

Inspection of Rectory Farm Primary School

Olden Road, Rectory Farm, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 5DD

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have created a happy school community. Staff work together to make sure that pupils' needs are met and that they are ready to learn. Pupils feel safe and are confident that there is always an adult who will listen to their worries. They feel that poor behaviour and bullying are rare. When problems happen, they are sorted out straight away.

Pupils listen to each other and share their ideas with confidence. They learn to 'disagree respectfully'. Pupils are keen to do well. They respond to the guidance given by adults. For example, they know what they have to do to become better readers.

Pupils appreciate the range of experiences provided for them. For instance, they speak with pride about the works of art that they have made which will be displayed in the National Gallery. Leaders make sure that the youngest pupils get off to a flying start. They have high aspirations for them. Pupils do not currently have full access to all subjects in the curriculum. Some subjects are not well planned. This limits pupils' learning.

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

Leaders have made sure that all members of staff know how to teach reading well. No time is lost before making sure that the children learn the sounds that letters make, during their Reception Year. Most of the books that pupils read contain words which match the sounds that they know. Projects such as learning the story of 'The Merchant of Venice' capture pupils' imaginations. Teachers model reading with expression. They encourage pupils to think carefully about the meaning of words and 'read between the lines'. Pupils read frequently. They recommend authors with enthusiasm. However, a few pupils still need to use strategies that they have learned to read unfamiliar words.

Teachers plan lessons in subjects such as mathematics and science so that pupils can build on what they already know. For example, some pupils used what they knew about obtuse and acute angles when they classified triangles. Teachers help pupils to think more deeply. Pupils know that the 'Einstein' symbol means that they have to use enquiry skills in science.

Leaders are improving the teaching of history. Teachers are beginning to help pupils make the connections between how people lived at different times. For example, older pupils knew that alliances were important in Tudor times and in the Second World War. However, what pupils are taught in several other subjects is limited. For example, leaders have paused the teaching of modern foreign languages. Pupils do not have the chance to build on what they learned before. The curriculum is not as broad as it was. Pupils have fewer opportunities to know more and remember more each year in foundation subjects such as design technology, music and computing.

Leaders do not make sure that the curriculum prepares pupils well for all the subjects that they will study at secondary school.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils in the early years. Children cooperate with each other and enjoy learning together. They concentrate well. Some children do not speak clearly when they start at the school. Leaders quickly work out the help that they need. They make sure that extra support helps children catch up quickly. Children learn new ideas such as 'push' and 'pull'. They use these to explain how objects move.

Many activities help pupils to become confident individuals. Pupils look forward to watching live performances. Opportunities to observe actors and visit the theatre broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils can join in a wide range of sports such as tennis and curling. Leaders make sure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can take part. Young leaders help each other to play games on the playground. Pupils vote for their school councillors. They are keen to make their school and the local area a better place to be.

The coordinator for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) supports staff well. Teachers know how to change their plans to help pupils with SEND learn better. Leaders have established the 'cherry tree room' to provide support for pupils' personal development. Staff help pupils to become good learners and manage their feelings better. This has made a big difference to these pupils. Most become ready to learn and catch up with their peers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders understand the challenges that pupils may face within the local area. All staff are well trained to spot signs that may indicate that pupils are at risk. They know how to pass on concerns. Leaders make timely referrals to external agencies. They help pupils and families to find the support that they need. Leaders meet regularly to check that actions are being put in place and are making a difference.

Governors check that pupils understand what they have learned about how to keep themselves safe. All teachers make sure that pupils know how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in key stage 2 have, until this year, had the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language. Leaders have paused this access to the full curriculum entitlement. Pupils currently, therefore, are not able to access this provision. Leaders need to implement their plans to re-introduce a modern foreign language.

- Leaders have not made sure that there is a consistently well-sequenced curriculum in all subjects. Pupils have limited access to a broad curriculum. They do not develop sufficient knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that they develop teachers' subject knowledge to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. They should implement a coherent and sequenced plan in all subjects. They should make sure that this curriculum is ambitious and prepares pupils well for the key stage 3 curriculum.

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 are the school and you are 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	143542
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10119924
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Adrian White
Headteacher	Sarah Heslop
Website	www.rectoryfarm.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Rectory Farm primary school converted to become an academy on 1 February 2017. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged as requires improvement.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with senior leaders and the chief executive officer of Northampton Primary Academy Trust. We met with governors, staff, pupils and parents.
- We undertook deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. We spoke with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and scrutinised pupils' workbooks.
- We considered teachers' planning and evidence of pupils' work in a wider range of subjects. We spoke with pupils and a range of staff.
- We looked at the records that the school keeps with regard to safeguarding. We spoke with parents, pupils, leaders and staff and considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Evans

Ofsted Inspector

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