

Inspection of Dereham, Toftwood Community Junior School

38 Westfield Road, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1JB

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils now access a good quality of education at the school. They achieve well both academically and socially. Parents and carers are positive about the changes at the school. They agree that their children are safe and happy.

Pupils enjoy positive relationships with adults and each other. Pupils are well looked after. They know that there is always someone to talk to if they have a concern. One pupil commented that 'Everyone is here to help you.' Pupils consider that bullying does not happen often. If it does occur, adults are quick to resolve any issues.

Pupils behave well. They concentrate in lessons and follow instructions without any prompting. Pupils play well together on the playground. Pupils told the inspector that the school's golden rules help them get along together. The most important one is to treat everyone as you want to be treated.

Pupils have opportunities to participate in a range of clubs and activities. Older pupils organise their own clubs that take place during lunchtimes. Some parents would like to see more activities after school.

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

The executive headteacher leads the school with a clear vision and direction. This has helped to bring about rapid improvement since the previous inspection. Leaders benefit from working alongside colleagues as part of the federation. An example of this is the way in which leaders have improved the curriculum. Subjects are well planned and sequenced. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum covers the things pupils need to know by the time they leave the school.

Curriculum leaders carry out different checks. They have a lot of information about how well their subjects are taught. However, in a few subjects, leaders do not have a precise understanding about how the quality of the curriculum could be further improved.

Teachers plan interesting activities that engage pupils' interests. Pupils revisit what they have previously learned to help them build their understanding. For example, in a science lesson, pupils investigating air resistance were able to explain their thinking because they knew about Galileo and Aristotle. Some teachers do check that pupils present their work neatly and accurately. However, in subjects such as mathematics and science, some errors in pupils' work are not addressed.

Leaders prioritise reading. They have clear expectations of the types of books pupils should experience and must read. Pupils develop a secure understanding of how writers portray characters, convey moods and develop themes in texts. Consequently, pupils achieve well in reading by the end of key stage 2.

Leaders have ensured that there is a consistent approach to teaching mathematics. Pupils have opportunities to apply their knowledge to solve problems. At times, the range of strategies they use for this work is limited. Activities do not challenge or deepen pupils' thinking so that they can achieve more. This means that although pupils' achievement is improving, some pupils are not achieving as highly as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in every aspect of school life. Leaders ensure that teachers plan work that is relevant to meet individual needs, for example using resources and making adaptations in the classrooms to ensure that the environment allows pupils with SEND to access the same high-quality curriculum as their peers.

Pupils have an active voice in the school. Through different roles, such as federation school council members or playground pals, they learn about democracy, liberty and mutual respect. Different clubs and activities promote pupils' understanding of keeping fit and healthy.

Governors know the school well. They make sure that the actions taken by leaders are making a positive difference for the pupils. Staff consider that leaders will listen and act upon any concerns. They feel well supported and are proud to be working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding within the school. Staff are well trained. They know how to respond if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. Leaders act quickly to address any issues raised by members of staff. Leaders seek support from other agencies to support families facing challenging circumstances.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when they use the internet. This is because teachers provide pupils with the information they need to keep themselves safe from harm.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum leaders carry out a range of monitoring as separate activities. Sometimes, the information gathered is not used effectively to identify the next steps that will bring further improvement to the quality of education. Leaders should ensure that all the evidence they gather is brought together to sharpen their evaluation of what works well and what needs to be done to have the strongest impact upon improving the school.

- Not all teachers insist upon leaders' high expectations of how pupils present their work. At times, this leads to inaccuracies and errors in pupils' work because they are not precise with their recording. Leaders must provide teachers with clear direction and check that pupils' work is presented to the high standards they expect and inaccuracies in pupils' understanding are addressed.
- The mathematics curriculum is planned and sequenced. However, leaders' plans do not provide enough detail for teachers to be confident about how to deepen pupils' understanding. This means that pupils do not always think hard about their learning. Leaders need to review their plans and provide teachers with the training and confidence to ensure that pupils are consistently challenged in mathematics.

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	120987
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10121358
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	349
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jill Smith
Headteacher	Joanna Pedlow (executive headteacher)
Website	www.toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	23 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Dereham, Toftwood Junior School is in a federation with Toftwood Infant School. The schools became federated in September 2017.
- The executive headteacher leads both the junior and infant schools. There is a single governing body.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.

Information about this inspection

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

- During the inspection, we had meetings with the senior leaders, the local authority representative, the school's chosen improvement partner and school governors, including the chair of the governing body. We met with the inclusion leader, who is also responsible for disadvantaged pupils.
- We looked in detail at reading, writing, mathematics, science and physical education. We talked to curriculum leaders and teachers about their curriculum

plans. We visited lessons in these subjects. We spoke to pupils about their learning as well as scrutinising their work.

- We met those responsible for safeguarding and looked at safeguarding documentation. We also looked at school plans and evaluations, leaders' monitoring records and attendance and behaviour information.
- We spoke to parents at the school gate to seek their views and considered the 84 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 50 free-text messages. We analysed the 21 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kim Hall

Her Majesty's Inspector

Duncan Ramsey

Ofsted Inspector

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020