

Inspection of a good school: Aslacton Primary School

Church Road, Aslacton, Norwich, Norfolk NR15 2JH

Inspection dates:

28 January 2020

Outcome

Aslacton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, parents and carers, and staff are proud of their welcoming school. Leaders have established a calm and friendly atmosphere, where pupils work and play well together. The older pupils like looking after the younger children. New arrivals settle quickly and happily into school life.

Pupils feel safe. Incidents of bullying and poor behaviour are rare. Parents who responded to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, all said that they would recommend the school. Many parents commented that the 'family feel' makes the school, 'a safe and happy place for children to learn and grow'. Parents appreciate the hard work of the staff. They enjoy events such as coming into school each week to share their child's learning.

Pupils are interested in their learning and want to succeed. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is organised and taught well. Staff expect pupils to try their best. Pupils enjoy additional trips and clubs that help to widen their experiences. Extra-curricular clubs include activities such as sport, cross-stitch and Zumba.

Leaders encourage pupils' understanding of other cultures through links with other places, such as Malawi. Pupils are well prepared for secondary school and life as educated citizens.

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

Curriculum leaders, who work across the trust, have thoughtfully designed the curriculum. There are effective plans that show what pupils will learn and in what order. Teachers deliver the curriculum skilfully. Leaders have carefully chosen 'core' stories to help pupils connect with and remember their learning in different subjects.

Teachers use their sound subject knowledge and appropriate resources to help pupils to become fluent readers. The teaching of phonics is effective in the early years and key stage 1 class. Consequently, pupils achieve well in their external assessments. Younger

pupils readily use their phonic knowledge to read unfamiliar words. Adults encourage a love of reading. Teachers use new texts and techniques effectively to develop pupils' understanding of what they are reading. Pupils in key stage 2 discuss their favourite authors enthusiastically. Pupils who fall behind get the help they need, so that they catch up quickly.

Leaders ensure that the mathematics curriculum is appropriately ambitious. Leaders have identified what pupils need to know. There is a clear progression for pupils to gain their mathematical knowledge and skills. Pupils know their times tables. They can confidently explain their mathematical thinking. Pupils' books show that they have opportunities to practise and develop their thinking further. Teachers are clear about how their lessons fit into a sequence of learning. However, the mathematics leader has correctly identified that sometimes teachers move on too quickly during lessons. Consequently, some pupils do not understand and remember their learning as well as they should.

Leaders have designed the science curriculum so that pupils build on their previous knowledge of a topic. Pupils' science books show that pupils increase their conceptual understanding as they move through the school. For example, work on materials moves from touch and investigating stretching, to work on insulation. Leaders check teachers' assessments to see whether pupils have learned what has been taught. They have identified the key vocabulary that younger pupils need to learn. They are now developing this more fully for key stage 2 pupils.

Children in early years get off to an exciting start. The stimulating learning environment enables Reception children and key stage 1 pupils to work and play happily together. They follow clear routines well. Pupils show good concentration when working with adults and during independent activities. This was seen during the inspection in the role-play travel agents, when children enhanced their geographical knowledge about Antarctica. Staff use assessment information to support children's learning. They ensure that the children are well prepared for the start of Year 1.

Teachers adapt learning for the few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They provide additional support and interventions. However, leaders' checks to see whether this additional provision meets the needs of these pupils are not thorough enough.

Leaders, governors and trust members work effectively together. They know the school's strengths and what could be better. They ensure that the curriculum offers exciting extra-curricular activities for all pupils, including day and residential trips. Everyone has high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Staff morale is high. All staff who responded to the online survey agree that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school sets a high standard for safeguarding. Checks on the suitability of staff are complete and up to date. Training for staff is thorough and covers issues such as county lines. Staff know how to use the school's new recording system when they spot a potential child protection concern. Leaders know who their more vulnerable pupils are and provide effective support for them.

Pupils are safe and know how to stay safe when online and in other environments. They trust the staff and say that they would tell them about any worries they might have.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The mathematics leader has correctly identified that at times, some children are moved on too swiftly in their learning. Some pupils cannot remember and apply new knowledge and skills as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that staff are skilled in knowing when new mathematical concepts have been understood fully by all pupils.
- Teachers adapt learning for pupils with SEND. These pupils also receive additional adult support and interventions. However, leaders need to be more thorough in checking what support works best for these pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Aslacton Primary School, to be good in July 2012.

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	143961
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10121415
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	62
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Jessup
Headteacher	Diane Bainbridge (acting headteacher)
Website	www.aslacton.corvuseducation.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Aslacton Primary School converted to become an academy in March 2017. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall. The school is now part of the Corvus Education Trust, with two other local schools.
- The school is much smaller than most primary schools nationally. It has three mixed-age classes.
- The current acting headteacher has been in post since May 2019.

Information about this inspection

- As part of this inspection, we held meetings with the acting headteacher, the leader for special educational needs and subject leaders. We also met with groups of teachers and pupils. I met a group of governors and members of the trust.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and science. We spoke with subject leaders, visited lessons, evaluated work in pupils' books, and met with teachers and pupils to determine the quality of education.

- We scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those on curriculum planning and development, records of behaviour and exclusions, the school's evaluation of its own performance, its development plan and documents provided by the trust.
- We took account of the 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- We evaluated 27 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 17 free-text responses sent by parents. I also held a telephone conversation with a parent.
- We spoke to pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning. We also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime. There was one response to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- We reviewed the school's safeguarding policy, procedures and records, including recruitment checks of adults working at the school. We spoke with pupils, staff and the designated safeguarding leader.

Inspection team

Julie Harrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Maria Curry

Her Majesty's Inspector

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