

Inspection of Mattishall Primary School

Dereham Road, Mattishall, Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 3AA

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2021

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?

Pupils at Mattishall school are happy and enjoy coming to school. Parents' comments such as 'my child loves learning here' are typical. Pupils listen carefully in class and join in with activities with enthusiasm. However, while pupils are being helped to read and use mathematical skills, they are not being supported to learn as much as they can in other subjects.

Pupils are kind to each other. They care for their school and help keep it a clean and pleasant place to be. Pupils have a clear sense of what is right and wrong. They help each other with minor conflicts through the 'friendship squad'. Pupils are sure that if they ever have a problem such as bullying, the adults will sort it out. Pupils feel safe and are kept safe.

Pupils enjoy being part of a school community. The oldest pupils help run games for the younger ones at playtimes. The curriculum allows for a wide range of visits out and experiences that enhance pupils' learning.

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

Since the school opened, leaders have prioritised improving standards in English and mathematics. Where the curriculum is well planned, especially in mathematics and English, lessons over time build on what pupils know and can do, so that pupils can achieve more complex understanding over time. For example, in mathematics, pupils are taught early on how to confidently use equipment to support their understanding of number. As pupils become more proficient, they are given opportunities to develop their understanding of pictorial representations, which furthers their understanding of number.

Leaders have introduced a new curriculum for subjects other than English and mathematics. In some parts this is detailed, but in others there is not enough overall planning for what pupils will learn and when. In these curriculum areas, teachers do not have enough knowledge about how to give pupils opportunities to apply their learning or make links between prior and new learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported in class by staff or through various additional intervention programmes. As with all pupils, progress is better in English and mathematics as a result of the stronger quality of the curriculum in those subjects.

Pupils are taught and acquire appropriate skills and knowledge in phonics. However, teachers are delivering phonics with limited up-to-date training and the resources available to them are often tired and unappealing to children and the youngest pupils. As a result, while the youngest readers learn to read effectively, leaders are not using this to create a love of reading among these pupils.

This lack of investment for early reading contrasts with the investment that leaders have made to raise the profile of reading with older year groups. In these year groups, pupils enjoy the books that teachers read to them. Pupils also like the wide range of books they can choose to read for pleasure, from classroom libraries and the 'library bus'.

In the early years, children have more opportunities than in the rest of the school to apply their learning. Teachers make sure that core learning is revisited often and in different contexts. Children settle quickly into the early years and develop independence.

Leaders make sure that well-being is of high importance, both for pupils and staff. It is a happy school and pupils feel well cared for. Staff feel supported and work well as a team.

The 'life skills' curriculum makes sure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have a good understanding of what respect for others means in practice. The curriculum allows for pupils to undertake a wide range of visits out and have visitors in to enable them to appreciate other cultures and places.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Systems are thorough. Any incidents or concerns are well documented and where necessary followed through appropriately with external agencies in a timely manner.

Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children and pupils and make appropriate referrals. Through the life skills curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example online.

All the necessary checks on staff are in place. Governors and the multi-academy trust regularly check on this; external audits are also held of the safeguarding systems.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum for some subjects other than English and mathematics does not lay out the content that is going to be taught each year. This means pupils do not build a deep understanding and learning year on year in these curriculum subjects. Leaders need to ensure that they plan with a greater level of detail so that teachers are clear on the exact content that needs to be taught each year, and so pupils develop a deep understanding and knowledge of these curriculum areas.

- Teachers lack the specific subject expertise and understanding to plan opportunities that allow pupils to make progress in all of the curriculum, beyond English and mathematics. Consequently, pupils do not routinely have opportunities to apply knowledge to new contexts and deepen understanding in some subjects. Teachers need to have sufficient training and/or support to ensure that they can confidently deliver the curriculum and provide these opportunities to pupils.
- Despite effective teaching of phonics, the resources used for teaching phonics and the early reading books are often tired and unappealing. Some teachers have not had any phonics training for several years and are not being supported to review whether the phonics programme could be improved to develop a love of reading in the youngest readers. Leaders should review the training for staff and resources on offer for the youngest pupils to ensure that they are offer the best opportunities to these pupils.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	144360
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10200545
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	189
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Williams
Headteacher	Tony Chapman
Website	www.mattishallprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a new school. It opened in April 2017 and is part of Synergy Multi Academy Trust.
- The predecessor school on the same site and of the same name was judged inadequate in July 2016.
- There is a separately run and registered pre-school on the school site.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other subject leaders. They met with the executive primary lead and the chief executive officer of Synergy Multi Academy Trust. They also met with members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics, history and relationships and sex education. As part of these they undertook lesson visits, spoke to leaders and teachers, looked at pupils' work and spoke to groups of pupils.

- Inspectors looked at the single central record and a range of pupil safeguarding files. They spoke to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors considered the Ofsted pupil survey, the staff survey and parent responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Ingram

Ofsted Inspector

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