

Inspection of Drake Primary School

Fairfields, Croxton Road, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1JW

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe. They treat each other with respect and kindness. Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and at breaktimes. They recognise that everyone is unique. One pupil said, 'We are all special for who we are.'

Pupils do their best to meet the high standards set by their teachers. Pupils learn in a calm, inviting environment. Pupils know what bullying is. They know that if it happens, staff will intervene and stop it.

Pupils work hard. Their positive attitudes towards learning start in the early years. Pupils are tolerant and accepting. They understand people are different. They are respectful of other beliefs and opinions.

Pupils play an active part in the life of the school. They are keen to be involved with projects that matter to them. For example, the school nutrition action committee has been set up to make the school a healthier place.

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

Leaders have managed a successful transition from an infant to a primary school. They have designed an ambitious curriculum for pupils to experience from Reception to Year 6. Leaders draw on specialist knowledge to enrich the curriculum, such as the local research institute who help with science.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. They are determined that pupils are thoroughly taught about looking after themselves and their mental health. Leaders make sure that pupils expect the most of themselves. They teach them about role models who have contributed to society. Pupils are inspired by the pioneers their classes are named after, such as the mathematician, Turing.

Leaders know what pupils need to learn and when to teach it. The curriculum has been organised so pupils build knowledge step by step. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In early years, children enjoy their learning. The curriculum for the youngest children is well designed and children are being well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Teachers check what pupils know and do not know. In lessons, they quickly spot if pupils do not understand what is taught. They make sure pupils have grasped what is taught before moving on. If pupils fall behind, teachers make sure that pupils receive the extra help needed. In a small number of subjects, teachers have weaker knowledge about what is needed to be taught. In these subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Reading is a priority. From early on in Reception, children are taught the sounds letters make. They learn how to put sounds together to read words and quickly develop early reading knowledge. Teachers make sure pupils have a lot of

opportunities to practise their reading. Pupils apply what they know so they can read fluently. Teachers regularly check pupils' reading. If pupils are not keeping up, teachers make sure pupils are quickly supported to get back on track. Teachers choose books for pupils that are matched to their knowledge and interests. Pupils are inspired to read by hearing their favourite books read aloud in class. Older pupils enjoy reading and do so with confidence.

Leaders are determined that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those attending the specialist resource base, receive an ambitious curriculum. All pupils have access to a broad range of activities. However, pupils' individual support plans occasionally do not include clear actions and targets that meet individual needs.

Leaders provide a wide range of trips and opportunities. They are keen to give pupils experiences that will excite and interest them. For example, pupils regularly receive outdoor lessons, where they can explore the natural world. Pupils are given the chance to work with experts such as musicians.

Governors know the school well. They are keen to support leaders to improve. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions which hold leaders to account. They perform their statutory duties well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has rigorous systems in place to keep pupils safe. Leaders keep detailed records. They are tenacious in following up concerns, so pupils receive the help they need. They work closely with other agencies to make sure vulnerable pupils receive the right support.

Staff are well trained. They understand the risks pupils may face as they grow up, both online and offline. They know what to do if they have a concern.

Pupils say they feel safe. They talk confidently about what they learn in lessons and assemblies, such as bullying, harassment and online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is not as strong as it could be. Pupils are not being taught the key knowledge needed to improve. Leaders need to ensure that pupils learn the right knowledge in all subjects to deepen and secure understanding.
- Some individual support plans for pupils with SEND do not include specific enough targets and actions. As a result, pupils do not receive the most appropriate

teaching that helps them build the knowledge they require. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum for pupils with SEND is matched to individual need and supports appropriate knowledge acquisition.

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	120995
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10200448
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carly Brien
Headteacher	Louise Rosen
Website	www.drake.norfolk.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school has changed from an infant to primary school since the most recent inspection.
- This is a larger than average primary school.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- Drake Primary School hosts a specialist resource base, primarily for pupils with autism. This is a local authority provision. The base provides additional support for pupils from Reception to Year 6.
- A separately registered childcare provision for two-, three- and four-year-old children is based in Drake Primary School. The setting also provides extended day care services. It is run on behalf of Drake Primary School Governing Body.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, specialist resource base leader and pastoral leaders. They spoke with four representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of the governing body. They met with teachers, support staff and pupils. An inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, personal, social, health and economic education and design technology. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work, and listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors considered the 87 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, including 62 free-text comments. They also took account of the views of staff and pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors looked at the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors, and pupils about safeguarding.
- There were no responses to the questionnaire for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Judith Sumner, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Beale	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Ingram	Ofsted Inspector

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