

# Inspection of a good school: Midsomer Norton Primary School

High Street, Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Somerset BA3 2DR

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Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

## Outcome

Midsomer Norton Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Midsomer Norton Primary are proud of their school. The school values of kindness, fairness and respect are clear in how pupils learn and behave. They are evident in pupils' relationships with each other and with adults. Pupils show an increasing awareness of diversity and equalities as they move up through the school. Pupils are part of an inclusive learning environment. They show tolerance and have appreciation of their differences.

Pupils study a broad range of subjects. They talk about their learning across the curriculum with excitement and confidence. Pupils value this ambitious curriculum. They feel safe to share, discuss and debate openly in their lessons.

Leaders prioritise pupils' wider development through a range of opportunities and experiences. These include links within the local community and involvement in projects as well as with local universities. Pupils know how these experiences help them to develop as individuals.

Adults have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils behave well. They value the recognition they receive for their behaviour and conduct such as 'greenie time' and 'gold cards'. Bullying is rare. Should any bullying occur, pupils trust adults to deal with it swiftly.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. It identifies important content they want pupils to learn. As a result, pupils secure new learning effectively. However, some pupils recall their prior learning more successfully where there is a more consistent approach to delivery from teachers.

Subject leaders are knowledgeable about the subjects they are responsible for. They monitor their subject areas carefully. Leaders collect a range of different information to find out about pupils' learning across the school. For example, they regularly ask pupils

about their learning. Leaders spend time in classes, work with class teachers and look at work in books. However, this information is not always used effectively to highlight gaps in pupils' knowledge in foundation subjects. Consequently, learning is not adapted to ensure that pupils know more and remember more over time.

Teaching in early years enables children to develop their physical development, language and communication, and early mathematics skills well. There is a clear understanding of what young children need at the different stages of their development. Adults carefully consider learning opportunities and their interactions with children to have maximum impact on their development. This prepares the children well for their learning in key stage 1 and beyond.

There is a strong reading culture in the school. Pupils enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors. They like listening to adults read to them. There is a clear and consistent structure to teaching phonics. As soon as children join in Reception, they start to learn phonics. Staff identify what further support is needed when pupils fall behind. They use a range of effective approaches that help pupils gain an understanding of what they read. There is a wealth of high-quality reading resources. This includes the library at the heart of the school.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff adapt learning effectively for pupils with SEND. Plans for these pupils are matched appropriately to their specific needs, and include the pupil and parent voice.

Pupils explore many aspects of the wider curriculum. For example, pupils learn to accept differences by learning about significant people and reading diverse texts. Pupils talk about diversity, stereotypes and equalities in detail. They feel protected by class charters and strategies that leaders have put in place, such as 'worry boxes'. Pupils said they can be open and honest in class discussions, particularly in their personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education learning. They value and talk positively about different roles and responsibilities they can hold, for example as peer mediators, champions for change and anti-bullying ambassadors.

Leaders have successfully created a school where everyone feels supported and valued. Staff model clear expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils show high levels of engagement in their learning, and are keen to do well. Attitudes to learning are consistently positive.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have a detailed and accurate view of the school. They understand the school's work on improving the curriculum and developing subject leadership. Governors work effectively with school leaders and staff, and provide appropriate challenge.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, keep pupils' safety and well-being a priority. The designated safeguarding leaders are knowledgeable about issues critical to pupils and families. They ensure that staff receive regular, up-to-date training. Staff are vigilant and know how to report a concern. Leaders follow up concerns and act on these quickly. They work closely with external agencies to signpost pupils and families to support and help, as appropriate.

The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to gain the knowledge they need to help keep themselves safe, for example in their relationships and when online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Assessment information collected in foundation subjects is not used effectively to identify precise gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils' learning is not systematically tracked to ensure that key knowledge is remembered over time. Leaders must ensure that assessment information is used well, so that staff address gaps in pupils' knowledge successfully.
- Leaders' work to develop aspects of the curriculum in some foundation subjects is not as consistent as it should be for some pupils. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders need to make sure that staff have the relevant knowledge to be more consistent in their implementation of the curriculum across the school, in order to support pupils in knowing more and remembering more.

## **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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Midsomer Norton Primary School, to be good in February 2013.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144830
<b>Local authority</b>	Bath and North East Somerset Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212132
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	276
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Stuart Warrener
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alun Randell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.midsomernortonprimary.co.uk">www.midsomernortonprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Midsomer Norton Primary converted to become an academy school in September 2017. When its predecessor school, Midsomer Norton Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school includes provision for two- and three-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and members of the governing board, including the chair. In addition, the inspector met with the school's leadership partner and chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and PSHE. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited

a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The inspector considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector listened to the views of parents at the start of day two. The 39 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 22 free-text responses, were also considered, along with the 38 responses to the online pupil survey and 32 responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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