

Inspection of a good school: Corton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

The Street, Corton, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 5HW

Inspection date:

17 February 2022

Outcome

Corton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are confident and happy. They enjoy school, behave well and participate enthusiastically in their learning. Pupils say that teachers help them to stay safe. They say that bullying does not happen and that there are several adults whom they can speak to if they have concerns.

Pupils learn the value of being positive citizens. They participate widely throughout the school community. Pupils value the importance of being part of a caring community where caring is 'just on autopilot, we do it anyway'. Pupils practise the school's core values through many of the leadership roles on offer. Play leaders, ambassadors, school council representatives and digital leaders are just a few of the roles that pupils can apply for. In these roles, pupils demonstrate care, respect and responsibility as well as teamwork and cooperation.

Pupils learn to love reading. They value the school library days and the wide range of books on offer. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), develop an enthusiasm for reading that grows as they move through the school.

Pupils learn about different faiths and accept that others may have different opinions to their own. Pupils understand that families are represented in different ways. Pupils and parents value the wide variety of clubs and trips that the school offers.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to know. They have created a curriculum where lessons build over time, to ensure pupils from early years onwards develop a strong understanding in most subjects. Staff have received training to address pupils' gaps in knowledge, for example in early mathematics. This is helping children in early years to apply their number skills independently across many areas of learning.

Appropriately trained staff deliver suitable support so that pupils with SEND enjoy learning and are able to access the curriculum with increasing confidence. Teachers check pupils' understanding routinely. Pupils develop secure knowledge in most subjects.

Reading, including the school's chosen phonics programme, is taught well. Children learn sounds quickly. In Reception, they begin to read as soon as they are ready. Many start to form their letters correctly and are soon ready to apply these skills to their writing. Teachers make sure that pupils build on the sounds that they already know. Most pupils are confident and fluent readers at the end of Year 2. Teachers know where pupils are in their phonics knowledge and provide precise support to help any pupils catch up when needed. All pupils spoken with talked about their enjoyment of reading and books. Pupils enthusiastically speak about their favourite authors and stories.

In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers deliver lessons that build on pupils' learning from early years to Year 6. Most pupils can confidently recall and explain their learning over the course of their time in school. In many aspects of the curriculum, they demonstrate a secure knowledge that they can build on for future learning. In some curriculum subjects, some teachers do not always plan or deliver lessons well enough to help pupils remember important information. They expect pupils to remember too much new information in one go. This means that some pupils are unable to remember the most important knowledge.

Leaders have put together an ambitious personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. Pupils talk enthusiastically of their experiences in this curriculum. For example, older pupils have used some lessons to identify and research possible future careers in astrophysics, archaeology, dancing and veterinary nursing. In their leadership roles, pupils enjoy organising charity and school events. Pupils at Corton develop into thoughtful and responsible young people.

Leaders have placed a high priority on pupils' and staff's well-being. Pupils with social and emotional needs are nurtured and well looked after by trained adults so that pupils can access their learning with increasing confidence. Staff are appreciative that leaders consider their workload.

Governors have a clear oversight of the impact of leaders' actions. They play an important part in ensuring leaders identify the right priorities for school improvement. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about what the school provides for their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture for making sure pupils are safe. The procedures in place for reporting concerns are well understood by all staff. Records of concerns are routinely reviewed by leaders, including governors. Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils are well cared for, listened to and supported to stay in school. Leaders work effectively with families of vulnerable pupils to make sure they get the right support from appropriate

external agencies if needed. All checks on staff, visitors and contractors are thorough and appropriate.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe when online. Leaders arrange workshops to ensure parents are also aware of the potential dangers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not made sure that all teachers are familiar with important knowledge that they want pupils to know. This means that pupils are expected to learn too much information and consequently become muddled in their understanding. Leaders need to make sure that they support teachers to plan and deliver these few subject curriculums to the same consistently high standard, so that pupils' learning builds securely from early years to Year 6.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the 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 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	124727
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10212428
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	122
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nick Bailey
Headteacher	Nicola Rowland
Website	www.corton.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Corton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- Since the previous inspection, the early years foundation stage now includes a part-time and full-time nursery provision for three-year-olds.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, who is also the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and designated leader for safeguarding, senior leaders and teachers. The lead inspector held a meeting with three members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.

- Inspectors took account of a wide range of information, including the school's improvement plans and records of safeguarding concerns, school policies, documents and records relating to safeguarding, including the single central record.
- Inspectors also considered the school's own staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors also reviewed attendance and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents expressed in 42 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, and 15 free-text responses. An inspector spoke with several parents at the end of the day.
- The subjects covered in depth as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics and history. In each subject, inspectors spoke with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Varney

Her Majesty's Inspector

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