

# Inspection of Mulbarton Primary School

The Common, Mulbarton, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 8JG

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Inspection dates: 23 and 24 February 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at Mulbarton Primary School personify the words polite and kind. They are keen to tell visitors about the many positive aspects of their school. Older pupils relish opportunities to support the younger ones. For example, Year 6 pupils run a range of clubs for their younger peers at lunchtime. Year 6 pupils also lead the whole-school circle time. They gather pupils' thoughts and opinions about the curriculum and school life. These are then shared with leaders. This is one of the ways pupils feel listened to and cherished by staff.

Although they know what it is, pupils are unaccustomed to bullying and unkind behaviour. They say it does not happen often at school. They know staff will give reminders and support to help a pupil make the right choices. Pupils say staff are very kind and solve problems well. This means pupils feel happy and safe at their school.

Pupils benefit from a well-constructed curriculum. They speak positively about the work and support they received during periods of remote learning.

Many pupils are proficient readers. They receive effective teaching and strong support both in school and at home. Pupils love books because their teachers' love of books is infectious. Pupils speak knowledgeably and keenly about the books their teachers read to them.

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

There is much to celebrate in the school's approach to reading. Recently, leaders implemented a new phonics programme. They ensured all staff received training to teach it well. Pupils receive books containing sounds they learned. This helps them to read confidently and with increasing fluency. Teachers are quick to spot those pupils needing extra support. A team of confident teaching assistants provide extra practice that helps many pupils catch up. Older pupils read widely and often. Teachers carefully select the books they read aloud. Not only do these books inspire pupils to read, they also complement the English curriculum and topic-based learning well.

Leaders have worked incisively to develop their curriculum. It sets out clearly what knowledge pupils will learn from Reception to Year 6. Teachers use this planning to devise appropriate activities that help pupils to develop their knowledge and skills.

Leaders' recent and ongoing astute evaluation means children in the early years get a strong start to their education. Staff are adept at teaching them. Children receive clear, engaging explanations about words and ideas. Staff share useful information with parents. This helps parents support their children's reading and further learning at home. Children present as confident, independent learners. Staff use storybooks and discussions to teach children sensitively about feelings.

Systems for assessment are working well in many subjects. Leaders have permitted teachers to trial different ways to assess pupils in some subjects. Some teachers are doing this well. They identify what pupils do and do not know in accord with curriculum planning. They use this to organise lessons or extra support to help pupils keep up. The same clarity is not true of all teachers' approach to assessment. This means some pupils are not achieving as well as they should.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) oversees effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are clear channels that allow parents and staff to identify a pupil who may need more support. The SENDCo helps staff select sensible next steps for the pupil. This support gets measured at the start and end to determine the pupil's progress. This thorough approach is working well for pupils with SEND.

Pupils' behaviour is delightful. Staff oversee a simple approach to rules and routines. Pupils know these and it creates a calm, purposeful environment at all times of the school day. Pupils know what rewards they may receive for doing the right thing. For example, the 'hot chocolate Fridays' recognise pupils who always behave well. Leaders oversee effective pastoral support for pupils needing extra behavioural support.

In the context of the pandemic, pupils' attendance is pleasing. Leaders check attendance meticulously. They engage productively with parents if they do have concerns about a pupil's attendance.

Staff cater well for pupils' personal development. To name but a few, pupils may attend extra-curricular clubs to learn boxing, French or singing. Pupils learn to be confident, considerate citizens through the school's personal, social and health education. The 'wow days' staff arrange provide pupils with exciting experiences to complement learning. For example, before Year 3 learned about the Stone Age, they built a campfire, made salt dough jewellery and recreated cave drawings.

Leaders, including governors, have worked hard to build supportive relationships with parents and staff. Parents praise leaders and staff for the care and education they provide to children. Staff speak well about leaders supporting them to do their best. Governors check the workload of leaders and staff is manageable. They make sensible amendments to policies and procedures where necessary.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors ensure they are suitably trained to oversee safer recruitment. Leaders make sure the staff and visitors in school have had the correct checks to confirm they are safe to be around the pupils.

Leaders deliver informative training for all staff. Staff are confident and knowledgeable about how to identify a pupil who may be at risk of harm. They know

how to report their concerns. Staff value the weekly meeting where information can be shared sensitively. They say this helps them work together to keep all pupils safe. Leaders know how to manage support for vulnerable pupils well, working with external agencies where needed. Pupils' trusting relationships with staff mean they feel safe to share their worries. They can do this verbally using the 'worry monster' or in writing via the 'worry box'.

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

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

- Currently, in some subjects, leaders have permitted teachers to select their own approach to assessment. There is inconsistency in the success of this. Leaders must determine the most effective system for assessment. They must train teachers to use it well to identify what pupils have learned and which pupils require support.

## **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>	120990
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10210882
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	445
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kevin Holland
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bev Theobald
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mulbartonprimary.norfolk.sch.uk">www.mulbartonprimary.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Mulbarton Infant School and Mulbarton Junior School amalgamated in September 2017 to become Mulbarton Primary School.
- The school is larger than the average primary school.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteachers and curriculum lead. The lead inspector also held meetings with several governors and a training and research director engaged by the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education.
- For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of other school documentation and policies, including records of meetings.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding leads. The lead inspector viewed records relating to safeguarding and reviewed the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors also spoke with teachers, support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors spent time observing and speaking to pupils. Inspectors also considered the 17 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by reviewing the 111 responses and 76 free-text responses submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, along with speaking to several parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors gathered staff members' views by speaking to several of them. Inspectors also took account of the 35 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Daniel Short, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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