

Inspection of The National Church of England Junior School, Grantham

Castlegate, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6SR

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like being at school. They work and play happily with each other. One pupil told inspectors, 'Everybody is welcome and accepted here'. Pupils know that the staff care for them. Leaders prioritise pupils' mental health and well-being. Pupils say that they feel safe.

The school's core Christian values are a central part of this inclusive school. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their work and each other. They have a clear understanding of equality and diversity. Pupils are motivated and enjoy contributing to the life of the school. They are proud to be eco-councillors and mini-police officers.

Pupils generally behave well. They act mostly in a calm and orderly manner. However, pupils are sometimes disruptive when some staff's expectations of their behaviour are not high enough. Pupils told us that sometimes it is hard to concentrate in class because of disruptive behaviour.

Leaders have not ensured that they have made it clear what they want pupils to learn and when in different subjects. They have not made sure that pupils have a secure understanding of different faiths and British values. Some parents and carers would like more support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Other parents say that the school does not offer enough extra-curricular clubs.

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

Leaders, including multi-academy trust leaders, know that there is work to do to improve the school. Following a very recent move to a new multi-academy trust, leaders have acted quickly to bring about improvement. Trust representatives now make regular checks on the school's progress. Curriculum plans are being reviewed.

The quality of education has not improved since the previous inspection. It is not always clear from curriculum plans what pupils should be learning and when. In science, improvements are already underway. Leaders have a clear vision and ambition for the subject. However, leaders have not yet identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. In other subjects, curriculum thinking is not clear enough. Leaders have not identified curriculum content with sufficient precision to enable pupils to learn the most important knowledge. This prevents pupils from building their understanding over time. Subject leaders do not regularly check how successfully pupils access the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that reading is a priority. Books match the letters and sounds that pupils are learning. Staff teach pupils to use decoding skills to sound out unfamiliar words. They regularly check how successfully pupils learn new sounds. Leaders are quick to provide support when pupils fall behind. However, the support for those

who struggle to read is not consistent across the school. There is not a sharp enough focus on the teaching of phonics to help pupils become fluent in reading.

Pupils like mathematics. Leaders have planned the curriculum in this subject well. Pupils use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary. For example, they use 'fraction' when discussing parts of a whole. Other pupils use and understand the term 'algebra'. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils across the school to reason mathematically and solve problems. They frequently check pupils' learning. Teachers are quick to provide support if pupils get stuck.

Leaders do not ensure that pupils with SEND access the full curriculum at all times. Teachers do not consistently support pupils with SEND well enough. Leaders ensure that systems are in place to identify pupils' needs. However, they do not regularly check how successfully pupils access the curriculum. Leaders do not communicate well enough with parents of pupils with SEND.

Some staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour. This leads to some disruption in lessons. It also prevents some pupils from concentrating on their learning. Leaders do not track behaviour incidents closely enough. They do not always know when pupils typically misbehave. This prevents leaders from taking prompt action to prevent some behaviour incidents occurring.

Pupils understand the different forms that families can take. They understand right and wrong. Pupils know how to eat healthily and keep fit. Leaders have organised the curriculum so that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. However, some pupils' understanding of British values and different faiths is fragile. Leaders do not consistently check how successfully pupils access the curriculum for their personal development.

The school's leaders engage well with staff. They take account of workload and consider staff well-being. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school's leaders.

Multi-academy trust leaders and members of the interim board know the school well. They support leaders and hold them to account. Trust leaders support the school's leaders to develop the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of care at the school. Leaders provide support to vulnerable pupils and their families. They act quickly when they have a safeguarding concern. Leaders work closely with external agencies so that pupils receive the support they need. They maintain comprehensive records of any pupils about whom they have safeguarding concerns.

Staff are appropriately trained. They know how to record concerns about a pupil or family. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and know who to go to if they have a concern. They know that their concerns will be taken seriously.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are not providing a good enough quality of education. The curriculum is not consistently well organised. Across a range of subjects, curriculum thinking does not precisely identify the important knowledge pupils need to learn and when, from Year 3 to the end of key stage 2. As a result, pupils across all year groups do not achieve as highly as they should. Leaders should ensure that curriculum thinking for all subjects identifies the knowledge that all pupils, in all year groups, including those with SEND, should know and by when.
- Leaders' approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of education is not rigorous enough. Leaders do not have a sharp enough insight into the impact of their actions to bring about the necessary improvements. Leaders do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how successfully the curriculum supports pupils to know and remember more. As a result, pupils do not always benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders should ensure that the approach to monitoring and evaluation is rigorous enough and informs leaders sufficiently well enough to drive improvements in the school's quality of education.
- Not all staff routinely ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum well enough. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders should make sure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need, so that they achieve as highly as they should.
- Not all staff have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour. This leads to some disruption in lessons which can, in turn, disrupt some pupils' learning. Leaders do not track behaviour incidents closely enough to be able to identify pupils who require support to manage their behaviour. Leaders should ensure that all staff understand the importance of having the highest expectations of all pupils and know how to apply the school's systems for managing pupils' behaviour consistently.
- Some pupils' knowledge of British values and different faiths is fragile. Although they know to respect difference, some pupils are not as aware as they should be of what these differences may be. Leaders should ensure that pupils have the necessary knowledge and understanding of British values and different faiths.

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	138282
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10212258
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	346
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jerry Woolner
Headteacher	Angela Comerford
Website	www.nationaljuniorschool.com
Date of previous inspection	12 and 13 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The school joined the Lincolnshire Anglican Academy Trust in November 2021.

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 of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the assistant leader with responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEND, and a sample of teaching and support staff.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the interim board and a leader from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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