

Inspection of a good school: Colby Primary School

Bridge Road, Colby, Norwich, Norfolk NR11 7EA

Inspection date: 28 June 2022

Outcome

Colby Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Colby Primary really enjoy school. They are enthusiastic about their learning and benefit from a wide range of interesting visitors and trips out, which help bring topics to life. They take part in lots of clubs, and many learn to play an instrument.

Pupils are all encouraged to be leaders, as stated in the school's motto. They have a range of responsibilities that they take very seriously. These begin from the start of Reception, where, for example, they water the plants in their garden. The older pupils take on important roles, such as house or eco captains. The youngest pupils are linked with 'buddies' from the older classes to help them settle into the school.

At lunchtimes, pupils develop skills of curiosity and collaboration, as they build dens and take part in a wide range of games. They are strongly encouraged to be healthy, take part in exercise and eat well. The gardening club members are rightly proud of the vegetables and fruit they have grown.

Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils know lots of adults that they could go to if they were worried about something. They are confident that staff would help sort out any problems.

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

The curriculum is well planned. Leaders have thought carefully about the different paths that pupils take through the school due to the mixed-age classes. They make sure that all pupils are taught the skills and knowledge they need, at the right stage.

Teachers adapt learning well for the different year groups and abilities in their classes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their specific needs identified quickly. Teachers create detailed plans to address these needs. Teachers and support staff put plans into action well to make sure that pupils with SEND are able to access the curriculum in an appropriate way. Across the school, teachers check on pupils'

understanding during and after lessons. They use extra intervention groups as and when needed to help pupils effectively to keep up or catch up.

Pupils are taught to read using a consistent approach across the school. The books they take home are well matched to the sounds that they know. As a result, pupils quickly become fluent readers. However, sometimes adults do not model pronunciation of sounds precisely enough. Nor do they consistently correct pupils when they mispronounce important sounds. As a result, pupils do not learn these sounds as efficiently as they could. As pupils move through the school, they access an extensive range of quality texts, which motivate them to read widely and regularly. Pupils told us: 'There are so many books, sometimes it's hard to choose.'

Staff have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, pupils are well behaved. The older ones look out for the younger ones, making sure that they have a friend if they are lonely or upset. Pupils talk excitedly about the events that help bring them together as a community, such as the 'crazy sleepover'. Pupils' achievements in areas such as athletics are highly celebrated in assemblies, displays and photos. Pupils are proud of these being acknowledged.

Pupils are respectful and tolerant of others' ways of life. They have good knowledge of different countries and cultures. They are encouraged to be caring, for example by helping look after the various school animals.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. Staff work collaboratively, sharing expertise and good practice. This helps them to develop confidence and subject knowledge to teach all subject areas effectively.

The governing body is consulting on whether to federate with other schools. Parents, staff and governors all truly care about the school and want to do the right thing for the pupils. However, disagreements about what the solution looks like have led to a division in the views of the governing body. This has been a distraction from its core role, taking most of recent meeting time and getting in the way of effective governance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know the pupils well. Staff are vigilant in making sure that pupils are safe and that any concerns are followed up quickly. They make sure that pupils get additional help if needed, including external agencies if required.

All appropriate checks are made on staff before they are employed.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe out and about and online. Right from the start, they practise road safety, by regularly and sensibly crossing a road while walking to their school field.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The governing body is too preoccupied with managing the differences in opinion about the future development of the school. This is taking up the majority of governor meetings and important discussion time. As a result, governance is not providing the correct level of support and challenge to school leaders. Governors need to find ways to move forwards, collaborate on the key issues that unite them and become an effective governing body.
- The way that teachers and support staff model and expect pupils to say phonic sounds is not always as accurate as it needs to be. This means that pupils are at risk of not developing precise enough reading skills. Leaders need to ensure that all staff have appropriate training and support to teach phonics accurately.

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 January 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	120798
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10206470
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	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jill Steward
Headteacher	Christine Mead
Website	www.colby.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average primary school.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school clubs, under the oversight of the governing body.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision to meet the needs of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, physical education and geography. 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.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and a sample of safeguarding records. They spoke to staff and pupils.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders and other staff. They met with representatives of the governing body. They spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- Inspectors spent time observing playtimes.
- Inspectors considered the 69 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, 48 responses to the pupil survey and 14 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sharon Waldron

Her Majesty's Inspector

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