

Inspection of The Bishop's Church of England Primary Academy

Canterbury Way, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1EB

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

The Bishop's Church of England Primary Academy is an improving school. Pupils, and children in early years, generally get on well with each other. Incidents of bullying are quickly resolved by adults. Many pupils are respectful and polite. They are proud of their school and its place in the community.

The school is an increasingly calm place for pupils to learn. Children in early years quickly learn and follow school routines. There is much less disruption to pupils' learning in lessons than in the past. Most pupils listen carefully to teachers and enjoy their learning. There are some lessons, however, where pupils do not focus well enough on their studies. In these instances, teachers do not deal with poor behaviour consistently well.

Pupils enjoy the range of physical activities at lunchtime and through clubs after school. A well-considered personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum teaches pupils well about a range of topics, including how others may be different from themselves. A range of trips and visits enables pupils to have different experiences and broadens their horizons.

Pupils no longer experience an inadequate quality of education. Pupils study a range of different subjects and topics which excite their interest. While the curriculum is improving, there is more work to do to ensure a good quality of education.

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

With the support of the trust, leaders and staff are determinedly tackling the main issues in the curriculum identified by the previous inspection report. Leaders have put in place a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. All pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects.

Curriculum plans arrange knowledge clearly from early years up to Year 6. The early years curriculum, for example, provides children with the support they need to get them ready for Year 1. Across the school, leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to know and be able to do. Where the curriculum works well, key knowledge is outlined clearly in curriculum plans. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that support learning. They use checks in class to see what pupils already know so they can build learning steadily as pupils move through the school.

This is not the case for the whole curriculum. The plans for some subjects have only recently been put in place. Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They have not evaluated the impact the curriculum is having and where improvements are needed. In these subjects, some teachers do not consistently plan lessons well enough to enable pupils to practise and apply their knowledge and understanding. Teachers' checks on learning are not always helpful in identifying what pupils know.

Pupils in key stage one and key stage two are not making good enough progress through some areas of the curriculum.

Leaders have improved the teaching of reading. Pupils talk about the books that they enjoy. Their love of reading is growing. For older pupils, the reading curriculum now supports pupils well with their reading knowledge. Children in early years benefit from a well-planned reading curriculum. Phonics knowledge is carefully arranged so that children learn their sounds in a logical order. Children in early years are well prepared for Year 1 and beyond. Across the school, adults' effective support helps the weaker readers to catch up with their peers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have a mixed experience in the classroom. Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Some teachers, however, do not use this information to support these pupils well enough in lessons. Some pupils with SEND are falling behind with their learning.

Leaders have put in place a range of strategies to support pupils with the most challenging behaviour. Well-considered behaviour interventions are beginning to have a positive impact. The number of permanent exclusions and suspensions is reducing. However, some staff are not consistently applying the school's behaviour policy well enough. While pupils' behaviour has improved, leaders have more work to do to ensure that pupils' behaviour is good.

The pandemic has affected how the school engages with the local community. Leaders are re-establishing positive relationships with pupils and their families. Some pupils, however, are still struggling to attend school. Leaders' work with families has resulted in some small successes, but this is not enough. Persistent absence remains an issue, particularly for pupils with SEND.

The school's approach to personal development is a strength. The PSHE curriculum ties in and supports the school's values. It helps pupils and children communicate how they feel. Good-quality pastoral care helps pupils, and children in early years, manage their emotions. Pupils are becoming increasingly resilient to setbacks. Pupils are beginning to see themselves as members of the school community.

Leaders recognise that the work to improve the school has led to an increase in staff workload. Despite this, staff support leaders' drive for improvement. Leaders' and trustees' accurate evaluations pinpoint appropriate next steps to improve the school further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Appropriate training supports staff well to spot if a child is at risk of harm. Staff, at all levels, understand the risks pupils face, including risks in the community. Safeguarding concerns are recorded promptly to safeguarding leaders. Safeguarding records show detailed and

appropriate actions in response to concerns raised. Leaders use a range of effective support from other agencies to ensure pupils and their families get the help they need.

Staff teach pupils effectively how to stay safe. Pupils know about risks to themselves, including when going online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff have not developed the knowledge and expertise to implement the curriculum consistently well. They do not use assessment well enough to check what pupils know and can do. As a result, pupils do not make sufficient progress through some areas of the curriculum. Leaders must ensure all teachers access high-quality professional development so that the curriculum is implemented consistently well.
- In some subjects, leaders have adopted new curriculum plans. In addition, some leaders are new to their roles. This means that leaders have not fully evaluated what is working well and what needs to improve. Leaders need to ensure the curriculum plans are fully implemented and evaluated so that pupils are successful in their learning.
- Some teachers are not using the information available to them to adapt the curriculum well for pupils with SEND. This means that some pupils with SEND are not making the progress they should. Leaders must ensure that staff know how to, and do, use the information they have to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Some staff do not follow the school's agreed behaviour policy. This means that expectations of pupils' behaviour are not consistent across the school. Leaders need to ensure that staff implement the school's strategies to manage pupils' behaviour confidently and consistently.
- Persistent absence remains high for small groups of pupils, including pupils with SEND. Leaders do not deal with pupils' poor attendance rigorously enough. Leaders need to put in place effective measures to support families so that all children attend school regularly.

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.

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	142633
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10241274
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	386
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Willie Crawshay
Headteacher	Lorraine Ratcliffe
Website	www.bishop.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 – 6 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2022.
- The school manages a nursery provision and breakfast club on site.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the school was in June 2016. The timescales for reinspection have been extended because of COVID-19. The next inspection is due from September 2023.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector held meetings with representatives from the governing body and the trust, including the trust's chief executive officer.
- Inspectors met with a range of school leaders, including the school's special educational needs coordinator and school business manager.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the school gate and at the school's coffee morning.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leaders. Inspectors looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. They spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the 11 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 11 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 38 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lynsey Holzer	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Beale	Ofsted Inspector

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