

Inspection of a good school: North Walsham Junior School

Manor Road, North Walsham, Norfolk, NR28 9HG

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Outcome

North Walsham Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's vision is for pupils to embrace the mantra 'big dreams for our futures'. This is demonstrated in the way staff encourage pupils to always aim high. Pupils leave the school with great confidence and a strong sense of optimism for their future lives. Pupils' knowledge builds well across most of the subjects that they study.

Pupils effectively manage their own behaviours and feelings. A small number of pupils who find this more difficult benefit from the mutual support of those around them. Pupils show respect for their peers and staff.

Pupils know that bullying is unkind. They say that it happens rarely. If it does happen, they know support is available that will help. For example, pupils know they can use the class 'worry box' or ask an adult in the school if they need help. Pupils are also taught knowledge that helps them make safe choices. This includes lessons on knowing how to use the internet safely.

Pupils take part in the wide range of creative and sports activities available. These include taking part in the art club or playing a musical instrument. Pupils like the expert sports coaching they receive at school. They also enjoy the trips to local historic sites that bring their learning to life.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders plan the curriculum, so that pupils build strong knowledge of the subjects they study. Leaders have designed a curriculum that is interesting and relevant. This helps pupils to access and engage with the work they are given.

Leaders have adopted schemes of work that guide teachers on what content to teach and when. This is typically used well. Where needed, staff get relevant support to help them in their roles. Leaders make sure that all staff are clear about what pupils need to know in

most areas of the curriculum. Teachers explain new ideas well and break down new learning into small chunks. They check that pupils understand important knowledge and the new vocabulary they are introduced to. When pupils are ready, they then move on to trickier work. In a few subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is not as developed. They are not as clear about what pupils need to learn and remember over time. Where this is the case, pupils find it harder to build up secure knowledge. Leaders understand this and have well-developed plans underway to address it.

The teaching of reading is a strength at the school. Staff teach reading well and tailor lessons to the needs of the pupils. Pupils at an early stage of reading fluency gain the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. The school has a rich stock of books to support pupils' reading. This means that pupils can practise the skills they learn in school at home. Teachers use quality texts that introduce pupils to a wide-ranging vocabulary. These include classic fiction and more modern works. Where pupils have fallen behind with their reading, leaders take effective steps to provide top-up work, so they catch up quickly.

Leaders are effective at promoting pupils' wider development. They plan a diet of relevant personal, social, health and economic lessons that are regular and age appropriate. This is demonstrated in Year 6, where pupils learn how to manage their personal finances and explore concepts, such as debt. They also take on school-wide responsibilities and take pride in the many awards that recognise their good work and behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons. When disruption does occur, this is managed well by staff, so that learning is not disrupted.

Leaders accurately identify the needs for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are ensuring pupils with SEND get the right support to access the full curriculum, alongside fellow pupils.

The governing body both supports and challenges school leaders to support the school to improve. Leaders make effective use of advice and expertise from within the trust. Staff report that leaders have taken steps to make sure that their workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. This underpins leaders', including governors', intentions that pupils should be safe and happy.

Leaders collaborate with parents and external agencies to protect pupils at risk of harm. Staff know the potential risks that pupils may face and report all concerns. Leaders follow these up quickly.

Pupils of all ages learn how to recognise unsafe situations. They learn how to protect themselves by making considered choices when online and by speaking up if they see something that worries them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not fully clarified their expectations for the specific knowledge that should be prioritised and remembered by pupils. This means that sometimes the curriculum in these subjects is not helping pupils to secure important knowledge, step by step. Leaders should complete the work started to ensure that the essential knowledge that pupils need to know and apply is explicitly clear. This will support teachers to build fluency in pupils' recall of what they know and check that it is secured in their memories.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2015.

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	145441
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10227565
Type of school	Junior deemed primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Lamble
Executive Headteacher	Joanna Read
Website	www.nwjun-infsfed.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in January 2018 and was formerly part of the Yare Academy Trust. It became part of the Broad Horizons Academy Trust in July 2022.
- The school uses one local alternative provision. This is a specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- As part of this inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector also held meetings with teachers.
- The inspector held a conversation with two members of the local governing body and a trustee.

- The inspector held a conversation with a representative of the Broad Horizons Academy Trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, physical education, and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and spoke with pupils at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector considered information relating to safeguarding, including the school's single central register of vetting checks on adults working at the school.
- The inspector took account of 38 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey and the views of staff.

Inspection team

Tim McLoughlin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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