

Inspection of Place Farm Primary Academy

Camps Road, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 8HF

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Place Farm Academy pupils are at the heart of everything the school does. Pupils understand and show the school's 'PROUD' values. They are professional, resilient, optimistic, understanding and driven. Rewards help to inspire pupils to achieve the high expectations leaders have of them.

Behaviour is outstanding at Place Farm. Pupils have very positive attitudes toward their learning. They work hard in lessons. This helps them to achieve well. Pupils listen attentively to adults and each other. During breaktime and lunchtime, older pupils help younger pupils to play together. Pupils look after each other at school. They understand how to keep safe, including when they are online. They know that adults will help them whenever they need it. Bullying and disagreements are rare and dealt with well.

Pupils love the activities leaders have chosen carefully for them. The range of visits and visitors support pupils to learn more about the subjects they study in school. They enjoy taking part in new experiences, such as the residential 'Kip on Ship' and the trip to the Theatre Royal. Pupils have many opportunities to hold positions of responsibility, including as school councillors. This also helps them to learn about values such as democracy.

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

Leaders have designed and put in place a clearly planned curriculum in all subjects. The curriculum helps pupils to build on what they have already learned. Staff teach the curriculum well in most subjects. There are occasions where staff do not adapt the planned curriculum as effectively as they could. This means that activities are not always as closely linked to what pupils need to know or do as they should be. As a result, some pupils miss the chance to secure new, or develop existing, knowledge. Despite this, pupils still achieve well overall.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Staff promote a love of reading through carefully chosen books and stories. All staff encourage pupils to read regularly. Pupils are inspired to read a range of books from different cultures. Well-trained staff support pupils who find reading hard. These pupils receive the help they need to become more fluent in their reading. As pupils become more confident to read fluently, staff help them to develop their understanding of what they are reading.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Effective approaches ensure pupils' support needs are identified and met. Leaders train staff well to offer this support in a range of ways according to pupils' needs. This means that pupils with SEND achieve well across the curriculum.

Children in the early years achieve well. They are taught how to read as soon as they start school. Early years staff are knowledgeable about the curriculum. Children

are encouraged to be interested and curious. This supports them to deepen their learning. Early mathematics is taught effectively, so children develop their knowledge and understanding of numbers. Children learn routines and the school's expected standard of behaviour quickly. This helps them to settle well. Sometimes subject leaders are not clear on how the curriculum in all subjects develops from the early years through to Year 1. This means that opportunities to develop children's vocabulary further are missed. As a result, children are not as consistently well prepared for Year 1 as they could be.

Leaders have placed a high priority on pupils' personal development. The personal, social, health and economic curriculum supports this well. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep healthy. In Year 6, for example, they understand the effects of smoking on the lungs and excess alcohol on the liver. Pupils learn about and understand the meaning of healthy relationships. They know there are adults they can talk to at school if they are worried about their relationships. Pupils are taught about people and families who are different from them. They have a secure understanding of a range of faiths and the importance of respecting those with different beliefs. Pupils engage in discussions about different opinions and beliefs respectfully. This helps them to show tolerance and respect for others.

Leaders check to ensure that staff's workload is manageable. Staff feel well supported. They are proud to be part of the school. Leaders work effectively with the parent community. Most parents are very positive about the provision. They appreciate the support they receive from staff. Trustees and local governors know the school well. They understand what is going well and how things could be even better. They support and challenge school leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Leaders ensure that staff have the training they need to identify concerns. All staff understand the importance of safeguarding and know the potential safeguarding risks in the local area. They understand how to identify and report any concerns. Leaders act on concerns quickly. They engage professionals in a timely manner to support pupils and families. Safeguarding records are well kept.

Leaders ensure that all pre-employment checks are completed thoroughly and accurately. Trustees monitor and hold leaders to account for safeguarding procedures in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While the curriculum is planned and implemented so that pupils achieve well overall, in some subjects, it is less deeply embedded than in others. This means

that, occasionally, teachers do not consistently adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, some activities are not linked closely enough to the intended learning. In these cases, pupils do not learn as much as they could. Leaders must ensure that all staff have the training they need to adapt the curriculum effectively so that pupils have even more opportunities to secure new and develop existing learning.

- Some subject leaders do not have a secure understanding of how the curriculum begins in the early years. This means opportunities to develop children's vocabulary are sometimes missed. Senior leaders must ensure that all leaders have a secure understanding of how the curriculum begins in the early years so that children are better prepared for Year 1.

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	138161
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10240936
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	406
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christine Quinn
Headteacher	Jane Sendall
Website	www.placefarm.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Place Farm Academy is part of Unity Schools Partnership. There is a local governing body that has some powers delegated to it.
- The school offers before- and after-school care for pupils.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised safeguarding policies, the school's record of background checks on adults at the school and a sample of child protection files. Inspectors also spoke with trustees, governors, leaders and staff about safeguarding practices at the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, staff, members of the trust, governors and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, attendance records, minutes of governor body meetings, school improvement plans and school policies.
- There were 84 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, which were considered alongside 40 free-text responses.
- There were no responses to the pupil survey. Inspectors spoke to pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- There were 40 responses to the staff survey. Inspectors also spoke to staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

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