

Inspection of a good school: Norton-in-Hales CofE Primary School

Main Road, Norton-in-Hales, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 4AT

Inspection date:

1 November 2022

Outcome

Norton-in-Hales CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a small school where staff know pupils well and care for them as individuals. The school's values are a strong feature of school life. For example, pupils learn to show respect by being kind, listening to one another and playing together well.

Pupils enjoy school and take part in a very wide range of activities. They are proud to be school councillors and sports leaders. They enjoy community activities, such as planting trees. They like working with pupils from different year groups. They attend a wide range of clubs, including sports, sewing, gardening and cookery.

Staff are ambitious for all pupils, and they achieve well. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the extra help they need so they make good progress. However, some pupils with SEND work on their own with an adult for too long. Occasionally, in a few subjects, staff give pupils work that does not help them to build on what they already know. This slows pupils' progress.

Pupils behave well around school and in lessons. They feel safe at school. They are confident to tell adults if they have any worries and know that staff will deal with concerns effectively. Bullying is rare, but when it occurs, staff deal with it quickly and effectively.

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

Leaders have identified the key information pupils need to know and when they need to learn it. Staff teach the carefully sequenced curriculum for reading, mathematics and writing to individual year groups. Consequently, pupils build their knowledge and skills well in these subjects. For example, pupils use their increasing understanding of mathematics to solve more complex problems as they move through the school.

Leaders give reading a high priority. Children start learning letter sounds as soon as they start school. Well-trained staff use their skills to teach phonics consistently and effectively.

In Reception and Year 1, adults build pupils' knowledge of sounds over time. When pupils fall behind, adults spot this quickly and support them to catch up. Adults carefully match the books pupils read to the sounds they know. This builds pupils' confidence and helps to develop a love of reading. Older pupils talk with enthusiasm about stories they have listened to and books they have read.

Leaders have made sure that the curriculum helps pupils to make links between different subjects. This helps pupils to apply what they know when learning something new. They achieve well in most subjects. For example, in art lessons, pupils learn about different artists and talk about the different colours, textures and patterns they use in their work.

'Friday quizzes' ensure pupils recall what they know. This helps them remember their learning over time. Occasionally, in a few subjects, teachers do not use the outcomes of assessment well enough. They plan work that is not well matched to what pupils already know or what they need to learn next. This slows some pupils' progress.

Leaders are adept in identifying pupils with SEND. Skilled staff support these pupils well. Most pupils with SEND learn alongside their friends and access all that school life has to offer. However, a few pupils sometimes learn on their own with an adult, rather than alongside other pupils. While this may help as a short-term coping strategy, this practice slows the development of their social skills.

Staff promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy visits from artists and storytellers, and everyone learns to play a musical instrument. They learn leadership skills and resilience on residential visits. Pupils learn about the importance of eating healthily and being active. They proudly represent the school in sporting events. They learn about the different cultures and beliefs found in modern Britain.

Through carefully planned activities, pupils have the opportunity to reflect on their work, behaviour and values. Activities that help pupils reflect on their friendships, such as 'Mindful Mondays', 'social stories' and yoga promote pupils' well-being effectively. Each day, pupils select an activity from their 'kindness jar' and do their best to carry it out.

Pupils understand the need for rules and observe their school rules carefully. They are polite and well-mannered. Any minor misbehaviour in lessons is dealt with very quickly so it does not interrupt learning. Pupils cooperate with one another well. For example, children in the early years worked together to construct a 'house' made of interlocking blocks. However, the outdoor area does not fully support the delivery of the early years curriculum. This is because there is a limited range of resources that teachers can use to encourage children's creativity and spark their curiosity.

Governors use their knowledge and expertise to provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support. Staff feel very well supported by leaders and value the training they receive. They all say they are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know pupils and their families well. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and know what to do to keep pupils safe. They are vigilant and report concerns promptly. Leaders follow up concerns quickly. They work well with external agencies, so pupils receive the help they need. Checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils are thorough.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and when they are in the community. Younger pupils know what makes a good friend. Older pupils learn about appropriate touch and consent. Pupils know staff will help them if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, staff do not use assessment information well enough to inform subsequent teaching. As a result, work is not always matched to what pupils already know. This slows their progress. Leaders should ensure staff use assessment information effectively so that they plan tasks that will help pupils to build their knowledge and remember their learning in the longer term.
- A few pupils with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties are sometimes taught separately from other pupils to help them manage their behaviour. While this is effective in the short term, it does not help them to learn the social skills they need when they rejoin their classmates. Leaders should consider ways to help these pupils reintegrate with their peers so they cope well when working alongside others.
- Leaders have not provided the necessary outdoor resources to support the delivery of the curriculum in the early years. This limits children's opportunities to extend their learning and play outside. Leaders should implement their plans to develop the outdoor area so that it promotes children's imagination and curiosity.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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.

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	123491
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10211202
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Buckley
Headteacher	Angela Alkureishi
Website	www.nortoninhalesschool.org
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Church of England voluntary-controlled school is part of the Diocese of Lichfield. A diocesan inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a CofE school took place in July 2015. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The governing body manages the before- and after-school provision.
- School leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader.

- The lead inspector held an online meeting with the chair of the governing body, which the vice-chair joined by telephone. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, art and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum and assessment in other subjects.
- Inspectors checked the school's work to keep pupils safe. The lead inspector looked at safeguarding records, including the school's central record of employment checks on staff. She spoke about safeguarding with leaders and governors. Inspectors spoke to staff to check their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. Inspectors talked to pupils about safeguarding and behaviour.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, lunchtime and during lessons. Pupils also talked to inspectors about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors considered a range of information about the school, including content on the school's website and information shared by school leaders.
- An inspector spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View, and an email received during the inspection. They also considered the responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helen Morrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Adele Mills

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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