

Inspection of Falcon Junior School

Falcon Road West, Sprowston, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 8NT

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm, friendly school where everyone is welcome. When new pupils arrive, they quickly become members of the Falcon Family.

Pupils feel happy and safe in the school's smart new classrooms or playing in its extensive grounds. In lessons and when moving around the school buildings, pupils behave very well. They are respectful to each other and to staff. Pupils say they trust their teachers and know who to go to if they have a worry. They agree that bullying occasionally happens, but are confident that the adults will sort it out if it does.

Staff expect pupils to work hard and aim high. Pupils respond well and are keen to earn rewards, such as credits, stars and the highly-prized 'Falcon Flyer' award. They take pride in their work and talk excitedly about their learning.

Pupils have lots of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. They enjoy trips, such as a recent Year 6 evacuee experience at the Time and Tide Museum in Great Yarmouth. They can learn to play an instrument or take part in a local music festival. They appreciate being involved in decision-making through the school council and eco council.

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

Leaders are systematically improving the curriculum. They noticed there was too much content in some subjects and have reduced this to help focus on the most important content. In those subjects that have been reviewed, teachers recap learning often. This, and careful sequencing of key learning, builds towards 'big questions' which pupils debate and discuss knowledgeably. This approach is helping pupils to know more and remember more. For example, Year 5 pupils recalled learning to name the parts of a plant in Year 3 and carrying out an investigation into what plants need to survive in Year 4.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not yet reviewed the curriculum. Content and sequencing have not been clearly set out and teaching does not always match the plan. Leaders did not spot this, as they are not routinely checking what is happening in lessons. As a result, pupils may not make as much progress as they should.

Teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They check what pupils know regularly, using a range of strategies to identify any who are not keeping up. They put extra support in place and change their plans if needed.

Reading is prioritised at Falcon. Those pupils in Year 3 who need extra support with phonics are quickly spotted. Skilled phonics teaching gives them the help they need to become fluent readers. A new approach to teaching reading exposes pupils to classic books. Pupils say they might not otherwise have chosen to read these but

enjoy them. Many pupils say they love reading. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors and preferred genres.

There are robust systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff adapt their teaching for these pupils so they can progress through the curriculum. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures that pupils with SEND get appropriate support.

Pupils' behaviour is calm and purposeful in the classroom. Low-level disruption to learning is rare. In the school's large outdoor spaces, some pupils' behaviour can occasionally become too rough. Leaders plan to introduce more structured, purposeful activities at playtime. Staff training is also planned, so that pupils can enjoy high-quality play.

Pupils know about healthy relationships, healthy lifestyles and personal safety. They learn to be active citizens by fundraising for charities that matter to them, such as Breast Cancer UK and Diabetes UK. They understand diversity and say that 'difference doesn't matter'. Pastoral care is strong and staff work hard to support pupils' well-being.

Leaders are conscious of staff workload. They take it into account when planning new initiatives. Experienced and committed governors understand their responsibilities. They are very supportive of the leadership team and share its vision. Despite the challenges they have faced, leaders have maintained their focus on school improvement. They are determined to realise their ambitious plans.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at Falcon. Staff are vigilant to any signs that a child may be at risk of harm and they know how to report a concern. Safeguarding leaders take appropriate action when concerns are raised. They liaise with external agencies if needed and ensure that vulnerable families get the support they need.

Pupils are very well versed in how to keep themselves safe online. They learn about personal safety through the relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education curriculum. They know that they should talk to an adult or use the worry box if they have any worries about themselves or their friends.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum leaders for some subjects have not identified the key content and skills to be taught. In these subjects, pupils' learning is not as secure because they have gaps in their learning and do not make links to their prior learning.

Leaders should review their plans, introducing careful sequencing and clear progression, so that pupils learn more and remember more over time.

- There are not enough quality play opportunities for pupils at playtimes and behaviour in the playground is not as good as behaviour indoors. This means pupils sometimes lose focus and can become boisterous. Leaders should ensure that plans for the development of the outdoor areas and staff training are implemented speedily.
- Some curriculum leaders do not routinely check the quality of education in their subjects. This leads to inconsistencies in the delivery of curriculum plans and in pupils' progress through them. Leaders should establish a programme of monitoring to ensure robust curriculum implementation, leading to better outcomes for pupils.

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	120913
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10242101
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alex McAnulty
Headteacher	Edward Savage
Website	www.falcon.norfolk.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, leaders were using one registered alternative provider.
- The school was housed in temporary accommodation from early 2020 until September 2022, due to flood damage. The building has undergone a complete refurbishment.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, the three assistant headteachers, the SENCo, two early career teachers, five governors and a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, art, physical education and computing. 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 their work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors looked at evidence from other subjects, including history, English, RSE and health education, and science.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and one of the deputy designated safeguarding leads to review records. A team inspector scrutinised the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors also spoke to governors, staff and pupils to evaluate safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of other school documentation and policies, including the school development plan and minutes of governor meetings.
- To gather pupils' views, inspectors spent time observing and speaking to pupils. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- To gather parents' views, the lead inspector reviewed the 91 responses and 51 free-text responses submitted to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors gathered staff members' views by speaking to several of them and reviewing the 43 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lucie Calow	Ofsted inspector
Nichola Pickford	Ofsted inspector

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