

# Inspection of Norton-sub-Hamdon Church of England Primary School

New Road, Norton-sub-Hamdon, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Somerset TA14 6SF

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Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending Norton. They show enthusiasm and passion for their learning. Pupils live out the school's six values of community, respect, aspiration, compassion, endurance and thankfulness.

However, leaders acknowledge that the quality of the curriculum is not good enough. They have now acted with more urgency to resolve this. Nevertheless, in many of the wider subjects, the curriculum is in its infancy. Teachers do not implement the curriculum consistently well. This means pupils do not learn as much as they could.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. They talk about the importance of equality. Older pupils help younger children in a buddy system. This develops strong relationships. Pupils feel safe in school. They say that bullying is rare and staff help them to resolve any issues.

Pupils enjoy a wealth of experiences beyond the classroom. For example, older pupils encounter new challenges through residential trips. They participate in a range of extra-curricular clubs to develop their interests. These include cooking, chess, gardening and football. Pupils experience a broad curriculum. They learn to play musical instruments, such as the clarinet. Younger pupils perform in a Nativity play. This develops their confidence and self-esteem.

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

While leaders are ambitious for pupils, they have not implemented a high-quality curriculum quickly enough. With the exception of early reading and mathematics, much of the improvement work carried out in individual subjects is very recent. As a result, teachers do not know how to teach some subjects effectively, including in the early years. This means pupils do not learn in sufficient depth across the curriculum. For example, in the early years, children do not always have activities that closely align with the curriculum. This causes them to 'flit' between tasks that are not purposeful. Consequently, they do not develop important knowledge as quickly as they should do.

While leaders have made a start on checking the impact of the wider curriculum, they do not have a clear oversight of the strengths and weaknesses of the whole curriculum. They do not know how well pupils learn in foundation subjects or the specific areas to improve. Despite the many recent changes, staff morale is high. Staff say leaders take their workload into account.

Leaders have prioritised phonics. They have introduced a systematic and rigorous approach so that pupils learn to read quickly. As a result of training, staff have effective subject knowledge so that they can support pupils to become confident, fluent readers. This includes those who have fallen behind. Staff identify these pupils

swiftly to ensure gaps do not widen from their peers. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders ensure pupils have adaptations that match their individual needs.

Leaders have a clear passion to promote a love of reading. For example, they have created a new reward system to celebrate those pupils who read well. Pupils of all ages enjoy story time sessions. Pupils read widely and talk keenly about their favourite authors and genres.

In mathematics, pupils benefit from a well-established teaching approach, including in the early years. They recap on their learning regularly and, as a result, remember more of the curriculum. Teachers check what pupils have learned and support them with their next steps in their learning.

However, this is not the case across the curriculum. Leaders have not established clear procedures for what teachers need to check and when. In some subjects, teachers are unclear about what pupils have learned. This means they do not know when pupils are ready to move on to more complex tasks. For example, older pupils sometimes complete activities in the reading curriculum which do not take into account what they can already do. As a result, they do not extend their knowledge as much as they could.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' personal development. They use carefully planned assemblies for pupils to learn about spirituality. While they have established a strong Christian ethos, they ensure pupils understand about other religions. This prepares them for life in modern Britain. Leaders develop pupils' leadership through roles such as sports captains and mental health champions. They promote the importance of contributing to society through the eco club, which carries out a monthly litter pick.

Governors acknowledge that they have not held leaders to account robustly enough in the past. Of late, they have carried out more rigorous checks of the school's work. They know there is more work needed to improve the curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure staff have regular, up-to-date training. This means staff are vigilant and able to spot those pupils at risk of harm. They record concerns in a timely manner. Leaders know how to escalate concerns to the local authority as appropriate. Staff work with external agencies to help pupils and families have the support they need.

Leaders have robust recruitment procedures. They make appropriate checks on visitors and contractors.

Pupils know how to stay safe online. Through visitors into the school, they learn about the importance of road and fire safety.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Teachers do not know how best to teach some subjects, including in the early years. As a result, pupils do not learn in sufficient depth across the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that teachers are clear on the agreed teaching approaches in the curriculum so that pupils know more and remember more.
- In too many subjects, teachers do not use assessment well enough to check what pupils know, including when they are ready to attempt more complex tasks. Consequently, in some subjects, pupils do not learn as much as they could. Leaders must ensure that teachers use assessment well in all areas of the curriculum so that learning builds on what pupils already know.
- Leaders, including governors, do not review the effectiveness of the implementation of the curriculum well enough. Consequently, they are not able to evaluate how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Senior leaders, subject leaders and governors need to check how well pupils are achieving across the curriculum.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123818
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241867
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	105
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Simon Roughsedge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Liz Stiddard and Jamie Caswell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.nortonandwestchinnockschoools.co.uk">www.nortonandwestchinnockschoools.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- One of the co-executive headteachers joined the school in 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. Its last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools took place in 2015, when it received an outstanding judgement.

## 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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 pupils' work.

- The inspectors held meetings with the co-executive headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads to discuss how they keep pupils safe in school. Inspectors considered the school's recruitment procedures, staff training, records of concerns, and leaders' and staff's engagement with external agencies. The inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the end of the school day and considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents provided by the school, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation.

### Inspection team

Jason Edge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Gould

Ofsted Inspector

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