

Inspection of a good school: Mundford Church of England Primary Academy

St Leonard's Street, Mundford, Thetford, Norfolk IP26 5ED

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 December 2022

Outcome

Mundford Church of England Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils live out the school's values of 'honesty, kindness and respect' in all they do. They trust that adults will care for them and keep them safe. Pupils are confident to share concerns with adults, including the very rare occasions that bullying happens. Worries or concerns are well managed by adults. The school is a happy and safe place for pupils.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations adults have of them. They enjoy learning the exciting and ambitious curriculum. Pupils delight in sharing their new knowledge with staff, their parents and each other. They know it is okay to be themselves. As one pupil said, 'If your friends don't like you the way you are, you need to find new friends.' They understand and celebrate differences between individuals. No matter what a pupil's background or beliefs, others treat them with kindness and respect.

Pupils who are 'curriculum ambassadors' are proud to carry out their roles. They work together to identify ways in which their curriculum subject can be further improved. Ambassadors know leaders take their views and opinions seriously. They value the important role they play in further improving the curriculum for their classmates and friends across the school.

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

The curriculum has been skilfully designed. Leaders are clear on the important knowledge pupils need to learn in each subject. Pupils develop a rich and detailed knowledge in many subjects, which they use to tackle ever more complex tasks. The youngest pupils, for example, gain a deep understanding of numbers to 10. They use their knowledge to solve problems and explain to adults exactly the steps they have used.

In some subjects, leaders continue to refine the curriculum. They have not yet identified the precise order in which pupils will learn all new knowledge. Where this is the case, pupils do not consistently connect all their learning with what they already know.

Reading sits at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils love listening to adults read stories to them, which, in turn, inspires them to read more. Adults are skilled at teaching phonics. Consequently, the youngest pupils quickly become accurate and fluent readers. Any pupil who finds reading difficult receives useful support to help them catch up. Pupils read more complex books as they move through the school. They have ample opportunity to talk about what they read. This helps them to develop their understanding of characters, events and themes.

Children in the new Nursery class learn in a calm and nurturing environment. They, along with children in the Reception class, are supported by adults who know the children extremely well. Adults take every opportunity to talk with children, read to children and ask them questions about what they are learning. This means children learn and can use more new words.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge in the subjects they teach because they receive regular training. Teachers quickly identify whether pupils are making mistakes in their learning and correct these. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have activities adjusted to meet their needs, but still have access to the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. These pupils learn well. Leaders precisely identify the individual needs of pupils with SEND and ensure they receive the right support.

The clear and consistent behaviour strategy means that pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils behave extremely well. If pupils become distracted in lessons, adults use 'stop and think' cards to help them to refocus on the task in hand. Consequently, lessons are rarely disturbed, and pupils concentrate well.

Leaders work well with parents. They provide appropriate information to support parents to help their children with learning. The regular 'Mundford Junctions', where parents join their children's class, help parents understand what, and how, their children learn.

Pupils develop their interests and talents through a range of clubs and activities. Many pupils represent their school in sporting competitions, including the recent cross-country race. Those who attend these competitions are proud to do so. Pupils develop a strong moral compass. They know the difference between right and wrong and show this in the way they behave.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Senior leaders look after staff well. They think carefully about their workload before making changes. Staff receive high-quality training, so they continue to improve their practice.

Members of the local governing body, trustees and trust leaders work in harmony. They all have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and carry them out with great diligence. The local governing body members make regular visits to school. They support and challenge leaders to continue to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture of vigilance to keep pupils safe. Adults know how to report concerns they may have about a pupil because they are well trained to do so. Leaders swiftly follow up concerns, involving outside agencies if needed. Pupils know the steps they can take to protect themselves, including when they are in the local area or online.

All checks made on staff, visitors and volunteers are thorough. They are recorded in detail. The local governing body and trust maintain a clear oversight of safeguarding. They make regular visits to ensure leaders do all they can to keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the knowledge pupils need to learn has not been precisely sequenced. This sometimes limits pupils' ability to build on what they have learned previously. Leaders should complete the work they have started to ensure the knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to learn are set out and taught in a logical order so that pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

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 predecessor school, Mundford Church of England Primary School, to be good in March 2014.

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	141584
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10255061
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	169
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	William Crawshay
Headteacher	Sarah Godbold
Website	www.mundford.norfolk.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	21 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Churchside Federation, and the executive headteacher leads both federated schools. The school is also part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT).
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in April 2022. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- The school currently uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provider.
- In September 2022, the school opened a Nursery class, providing education for three- and four-year-olds.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.

- The inspector evaluated the curriculum plans and spoke to leaders and pupils about several other subjects.
- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader. The inspector met with members of the local governing body and senior leaders from DNEAT.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised the single central record and reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. The inspector spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in school.
- The inspector considered 35 responses, along with 25 free-text comments, to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, along with 17 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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