

# Inspection of a good school: Woodlands Primary Academy

Church Walk, Bradwell, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 8QQ

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

## Outcome

Woodlands Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly school where everyone is welcome. Pupils are happy and safe. Staff know pupils well and place them at the centre of their work. Trust leaders, school leaders and staff are united in their aim to live up to the school motto 'the best of every child and a fair chance for all'.

Pupils play and work cooperatively across all age groups. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Older pupils look out for younger pupils and are good role models. Unkindness and bullying are rare. Should any bullying occur, pupils are confident that staff will sort it out.

Pupils learn a broad range of subjects. Leaders have high expectations of what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. Pupils live up to these expectations. They talk with excitement about their learning. Pupils generally do well. They leave Year 6 prepared for learning at secondary school.

Parents are supportive of the school and what it does for their children. They appreciate the care that staff take, with a typical comment being, 'My child's teachers are passionate and committed.' However, some parents voice concerns about staff turnover at the school.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have revised the curriculum to ensure that it is suitably ambitious across subjects. Leaders have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. They have broken down pupils' learning into small steps and set out the order in which pupils should learn these steps. In this way, pupils' learning builds carefully on their previous knowledge.

Leaders have provided useful training and support to deepen staff members' subject knowledge and hone their teaching skills. In most subjects, teachers have the training they need to put the curriculum plans in place well. Pupils develop their knowledge

through well-thought-out activities. When teaching is strongest, pupils practise and apply what they learn. This helps them to deepen their understanding.

Most teaching is effective. However, sometimes, teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough. This means that teachers do not address misconceptions or gaps in pupils' learning. This slows pupils' progress through the curriculum.

The early years provision, including the Nursery, is a strength of the school. Children get off to a flying start in reading, language and mathematics skills. Adults show children how to play and learn with others. Children follow routines that support their learning and personal development.

Pupils with SEND are served well. Staff identify pupils' additional needs accurately. They adapt their teaching so that pupils with SEND can access the full curriculum. Teachers use the information leaders provide about individual pupils' needs to ensure they get any extra support that they need. Overall, pupils with SEND make strong progress with their learning.

Pupils did not achieve as well as they should have in the phonics screening check in 2022. Leaders acted swiftly when they identified that they needed to improve phonics teaching. They have put in place a new phonics programme that sets out clearly what pupils are to learn. Leaders have strengthened the teaching of reading through intensive and regular staff training. Staff have the expertise needed to teach reading well. Children learn to read from the start of Reception. Pupils learn phonics well. They practise their reading skills with books matched closely to their phonics knowledge. Teachers are providing extra help so that pupils who have fallen behind are catching up quickly. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books.

Throughout the school, pupils are keen to learn. Pupils usually concentrate and pay attention in lessons. Teachers are quick to spot when pupils occasionally lose their focus and quickly redirect pupils back to their learning. This means little learning time is lost.

Leaders prioritise pupils' wider development, and in particular developing tolerance and kindness. Pupils learn about different cultures and faiths in the religious education curriculum. They know why this is important. Leaders have established a harmonious community where pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Governance from the trust provides appropriate support and challenge to school leaders to ensure that they focus on the right priorities. Some leaders are new to their roles. They have clear plans and actions in place to improve further the quality of education in their subjects. However, currently, they do not know whether their actions are making the difference intended.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and report any safeguarding concerns promptly. Designated safeguarding leaders carefully track any live issues, seeking support from outside agencies if appropriate.

Leaders make sure that all required checks are made on staff who join the school. Records of checks are kept diligently on the single central record. The trust provides regular training for staff and checks safeguarding processes are thorough.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They know who to go to if they have a concern.

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

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

- Several leaders, including subject leaders, are new to their roles and are putting actions in place to improve the areas they lead. They are not yet able to fully evaluate how well this work is progressing and whether it is having the intended impact on pupils' learning. Trust and senior leaders should ensure that all leaders have the time, support and expertise to evaluate the effectiveness of their actions and support future improvement planning.
- On occasions staff do not use assessment effectively to find out what pupils know and can do. This means misconceptions go unchecked and some pupils do not have the secure understanding of important subject knowledge needed for future learning. Leaders should ensure that all teachers use assessment effectively to address misconceptions and inform their planning.

## **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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

## **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>	139580
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255201
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	464
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Abbie Rumbold
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vicky Platten
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.woodlandsprimaryacademy.org.uk">www.woodlandsprimaryacademy.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27–28 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has experienced much staff turbulence since the last inspection, including the leadership of the school. The current headteacher was not at school at the time of the inspection. An interim headteacher has been in post since February 2023.
- The school is part of Creative Education Trust.
- The school places a small number of pupils at two off-site alternative learning provisions for part of their timetabled week.

## 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 held an online conversation with the chair of the trust, and met with five other trust staff, the interim headteacher, other leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders to

discuss the curriculum, carried out lesson visits, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The school website and a number of policies and documents were considered.
- The inspector considered the views of staff by speaking with them and through their responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector considered parents' views through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector spoke with pupils in small groups in lessons and around the school. Pupils' responses to the online survey were also taken into consideration.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with leaders of two alternative learning provisions.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and other safeguarding records. The inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leaders and spoke with staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Sue Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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