

# Inspection of a good school: Rackheath Primary School

Willoughby Way, Rackheath, Norwich, Norfolk NR13 6SL

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Inspection dates:

6 and 7 June 2023

## **Outcome**

Rackheath Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

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

This is a highly inclusive school where everyone feels welcome. Pupils are happy and thoroughly enjoy their learning experiences. The staff know pupils and their parents very well. This school truly lives up to its motto, 'Inspiring Learning, Valuing All'.

Pupils benefit from an exceptionally caring, nurturing environment from pre-school to Year 6. Pupils' well-being is of the highest priority. Consequently, pupils are kept safe. The school, including the pre-school provision, is a calm haven. Pupils behave very well and are kind to each other. Should there be any very rare instances of bullying, pupils are confident that staff will resolve it swiftly.

Pupils rise to the very high expectations of what they can achieve. They study a curriculum that is broad, rich and varied. Pupils talk with great excitement about their learning. Pupils thrive and develop a deep thirst for learning. They achieve well.

Parents are highly appreciative of what the school provides for their children. They are glowing in their praise for school staff. Pupils take part and value the varied extra-curricular opportunities provided, such as karate taster sessions and meeting an author.

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

Leadership is exceptionally strong. Leaders make sure that everyone shares the school's vision to 'put the children at the centre of all we do'. Staff work very well as a cohesive team with their shared aim to provide the best possible education they can. Leaders at all levels continually check the impact of their actions on pupils' learning and experiences. They are never complacent and they strive to improve the curriculum or any other aspect of the school.

The curriculum has been very well planned to ensure that pupils remember knowledge and skills long-term. Leaders and staff plan pupils' learning step by step. Links between subjects are deliberately planned to deepen pupils' learning. Pupils have excellent behaviour for learning and a very positive attitude to work. As a result, pupils of all ages achieve highly across the curriculum. They are very well prepared for their next stage of education.

Teaching inspires pupils across the school, including in early years. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained and they constantly strive to hone their practice. Teaching staff find out accurately what pupils know and can do. They skilfully adapt their curriculum plans if necessary. Assessment is effective and not overburdensome for teachers.

Leaders ensure high consistency in the teaching of phonics. Pupils practise their early reading skills with books that are well matched to their phonic knowledge. Any pupil who falls behind is swiftly supported to catch up. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported very well when learning to read. Staff foster a love of reading in their pupils. A consistent approach to teaching the understanding of text ensures that pupils tackle ambitious and varied genres of books. Pupils become confident, fluent readers.

Pupils are thriving across the curriculum, including pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND. Staff carefully assess pupils' additional needs and make provision for them. Staff have high ambition for pupils with SEND, breaking down learning into even smaller steps. Consequently, pupils with SEND make excellent progress towards their targets on their education, health and care plan.

The learning environment across the school is vibrant and entices pupils to learn. The rich and stimulating learning environment in the early years has thought-provoking activities to motivate children to explore and find out for themselves. Pupils grow in their independence and social skills throughout the school.

Pupils' wider interests and talents are catered for extremely well. Pupils are tempted to try new activities and find new interests. A rich extra-curricular club menu allows pupils to gain a wide educational experience.

Pupils are empathetic. Staff teach pupils to be tolerant of others' differences. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions. Pupils provide a warm welcome for new pupils and make sure that they feel at home. They have a keen sense of right and wrong. All pupils have been involved in developing the school's values and they live up to them. Pupils develop knowledge and personal skills to help them in their future lives.

Highly skilled and committed governors provide excellent support and challenge for school leaders. Governors and leaders ensure that staff workload is not too burdensome. This is so that staff can focus on meeting the needs of all pupils. Staff are highly appreciative of leaders' work to support them. There is a low rate of staff turnover.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding culture is strong because staff know the pupils and their families very well. Staff are very well trained and they spot and report safeguarding issues diligently. Knowledgeable designated safeguarding leads act swiftly to resolve issues. They work well with external agencies if required. All records are comprehensive.

All safeguarding checks on new staff or volunteers are completed thoroughly and recorded meticulously. Governors and leaders monitor safeguarding procedures to assure themselves that systems are effective.

Pupils say that they are safe and that they learn about keeping safe, including when online.

## 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 June 2013.

## 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>	120843
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268584
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Darren Murley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Ashman
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rackheath.norfolk.sch.uk">www.rackheath.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school took over a community pre-school facility, Bombers, in September 2019. It provides 26 placements for children aged two to four. This pre-school facility is overseen by governors and leaders.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## 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 met with five governors, including the chair. The inspector also met with the headteacher and other leaders.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. 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 by reading 28 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the school gate and considered 52 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector spoke to pupils at lunchtimes and took 69 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey into account.
- 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 leads and spoke with staff, parents and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Sue Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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