

# Inspection of Heartwood CofE VC Primary & Nursery School

White Cross Road, Swaffham, Norfolk PE37 7RF

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

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

Heartwood Primary is a warm and welcoming place. Pupils understand that there are high expectations set for them to achieve well and most pupils rise to this challenge.

Pupils are encouraged to be active citizens in the school and beyond. They are given opportunities throughout the curriculum to develop their sense of right from wrong. For example, in Nursery, children learn about how to be a respectful friend and how to understand feelings.

Pupils treat each other well. They have positive relationships with staff. Pupils trust staff to notice if they are upset or worried. They know that staff will help them if they have any concerns.

Pupils live up to the school's motto of 'Learn to love – love to learn'. They learn about different faiths and accept that others may have different opinions to their own. Pupils appreciate receiving recognition awards for examples of exceptional effort.

Pupils are proud of opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as helping in lessons, being a subject ambassador, prayer warrior or member of the eco club.

Pupils behave well and show excellent manners as they move around school. Pupils are confident that if bullying were to occur, staff would sort this out quickly. As a result, pupils feel safe in school.

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

Leaders and staff have pupils' well-being at the heart of their work. They have worked with determination to improve the school. The three golden threads running through the curriculum – making a difference, academic aspirations, and community and living well together – are set to overcome trends and challenges that the community faces.

Leaders' work to prioritise phonics and early reading has borne fruit. Staff successfully promote a love of reading. Daily story time ensures that pupils in all classes read high-quality texts. Books are chosen to match pupils' ability and interests. Phonics teaching starts soon after pupils join in Reception Year. Skilled teaching staff help pupils to become fluent readers. Teachers provide activities that allow pupils to practise using their phonic knowledge so that they can use it accurately when reading. Timely checks on what pupils know mean that those pupils who struggle to learn to read receive the support they need to keep up.

Currently, pupils do not always learn as well as they could across the whole curriculum. Leaders are supporting staff to ensure that all subjects are delivered as leaders intend. However, there is more work to be done. In some subjects, pupils' recall of prior learning helps them progress well. In a few subjects, opportunities to

retain and retrieve information are not always planned into lessons. Pupils are not able to remember some key vocabulary and knowledge in these subjects. While routine checks of how well pupils are remembering their learning are not yet embedded in some subjects, staff generally use assessment well to spot if pupils have gaps in knowledge.

In the early years, leaders have identified the important knowledge and skills children need to know to be ready for learning in key stage 1. Children are curious, happy and keen to engage with adults. They respond very well to adults' consistently high expectations. Adults teach the skills of early reading, writing and mathematics effectively. They thoughtfully plan activities in all areas of the curriculum that grasp children's interests and support their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively. A small number of pupils benefit from a well-designed nurture provision. This provides them with the help they need to access the curriculum. Staff are trained to use strategies that support pupils with SEND to complete work appropriate to their stage of learning. This ensures that pupils with SEND learn well across the curriculum and alongside their classmates.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Their relationships with each other and the adults are rooted in mutual respect. Teachers establish routines and expectations early on and pupils follow these diligently.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is based on the values leaders promote. Pupils learn about how to form safe, respectful relationships. Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular clubs that contribute to their personal development and add to what they learn in lessons. These are popular and accessible to all, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Trips enrich pupils' learning. All pupils have a firm understanding of difference and the need to treat everyone equally.

Leaders have a clear, shared vision for the school and a determination to realise it. They are supported by a committed and experienced governing body whose members know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Staff are proud to work at Heartwood. They feel valued and appreciate leaders' efforts to consider their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.

Leaders' systems for keeping pupils safe are rigorous. Leaders work collaboratively with external agencies and specialists to make sure that pupils get the support they need quickly.

Staff know the potential safeguarding risks to children in the local community. They know the signs that indicate a pupil may be at risk of harm and how to report concerns promptly. Leaders record all information carefully so that they can manage support for each pupil effectively.

Leaders carry out all the necessary employment checks on staff and safeguarding on visitors to the school meticulously.

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

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

- On occasion, teachers do not provide activities that help pupils to practise using the knowledge they have been taught. This means that pupils sometimes struggle to remember and apply important subject knowledge. Consequently, pupils do not consistently learn as well as they could across the entire curriculum. Leaders should ensure that staff consistently make appropriate choices about the activities they provide so that they support pupils' learning effectively.
- Leaders' and governors' oversight of some aspects of the school's work is not as sharp as it is for others. This means that actions to improve the school are not always as precise as they could be. Leaders should refine their monitoring processes so they can evaluate the full impact of their actions effectively.

## **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>	121059
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268019
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 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>	Kim Stabler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emily McMillen
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.heartwood.norfolk.sch.uk">www.heartwood.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 February to 1 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There is a breakfast club and after-school club for pupils on site that is run by the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a Christian religious character. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in January 2020. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

## 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. The 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, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, the 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 also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors viewed a range of curriculum documents for other subjects and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about several other subjects and aspects of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, governors and a representative working on behalf of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 51 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 29 free-text comments. The 32 responses to Ofsted's staff survey were also considered. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of school documentation, including policies and development plans.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors conducted meetings with leaders to discuss policy and procedure and to review records, including the school's single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The lead inspector also held discussions with governors, staff and pupils to gather further insights into the culture of safeguarding.

### **Inspection team**

Bridget Harrison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorraine Ratcliffe

Ofsted Inspector

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