

Inspection of Caston Church of England Primary Academy

The Street, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 1DD

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 September 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Sarah Disney. This school is part of The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Oliver Burwood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Willie Crawshay.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this small and welcoming school. Older and younger pupils play together well at breaktimes and at lunch. They know that if something worries them there is always an adult in school who can help.

The school has high ambitions for pupils' academic and social development. This is an inclusive school. Opportunities are open to everyone and all pupils are expected to do their best. This starts from the very first moment children start in Reception. Teachers help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve these high ambitions.

Pupils enjoy the clubs and activities that the school provides. This includes a range of sports clubs, additional music tuition, trips to the theatre and visits to local wetlands. These are helping pupils to try out new things. Pupils are proud of their work to help their local community. They arranged a sponsored walk to raise money for a local foodbank.

Pupils are respectful and tolerant of others. They welcome new pupils to the school warmly. Pupils are polite and friendly towards adults who work at the school and to visitors.

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

The school has worked to redevelop its curriculum over the last two years. This has resulted in an ambitious curriculum that focuses precisely on the knowledge that pupils need to learn. The school has thought carefully about the best order to teach this in and how to prevent pupils from developing misconceptions. This ambition starts in Reception where the youngest children learn challenging vocabulary.

The school prioritises reading. This begins when children first join the school. Staff are thoroughly trained to teach the school's phonics programme with precision. This is helping pupils to read well. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify pupils who are struggling with reading and give them extra help. As pupils get older, they are introduced to high-quality texts that sit at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy daily reading in lessons. Teachers contribute to pupils' love of reading by regularly reading to their classes with enthusiasm.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and typically teach the curriculum well. They choose appropriate activities for pupils to learn the knowledge and skills they need for their next steps. The school has an effective approach to assessment. This is helped by knowledge being broken down into small chunks in the curriculum. Teachers check if pupils are learning what they need to in lessons. Occasionally, this checking does not include as many pupils as it could. This means that teachers occasionally move on to new subject content before all pupils are ready. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified quickly and are helped to learn the full curriculum.

Children in Reception get off to a good start. Teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and what they can achieve from the very beginning. Children are taught the routines they need to be successful. This helps children to do their best.

Pupils' behaviour is mostly positive around the school. At breaktimes and at lunch, behaviour is often exemplary. In lessons, the behaviour of a small number of pupils sometimes does not meet the school's high expectations. This can sometimes slow pupils' learning. This is because many teachers are new to the school and are still embedding consistent classroom routines and expectations.

The school has robust procedures in place to challenge poor attendance. This is helping to improve pupils' attendance over time. For some groups of pupils, such as pupils with SEND, this is not improving as quickly. Significant numbers of these pupils have absence due to ongoing medical conditions. However, the school does not check well enough if the attendance of all pupils with SEND is improving sufficiently.

There is a comprehensive programme for pupils' personal development. This is taught in relationships, sex and health education lessons and through collective worship. This provides the knowledge and experiences pupils need to become well-rounded citizens. Pupils are positive about this aspect of school. They appreciate the opportunities they get in the curriculum and through wider experiences to develop in this area.

There have been changes to local governance at the school in recent years. However, the trust has worked to ensure that there has been continuity in the challenge and support that the school receives. This is helping the school to improve. Staff are positive about the support they receive from leaders in managing their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Many teachers are new to the school and have not yet fully established routines and expectations for behaviour. This means that, occasionally, a small number of pupils do not behave as well as they could. They disturb others' learning and learning time is lost. The school should continue to help teachers establish routines and expectations that minimise further disruption to pupils' learning.
- Attendance for pupils with SEND is low. This means some pupils with SEND miss out on important learning and other opportunities. The school should refine its approaches for monitoring the attendance of pupils with SEND to ensure that

patterns and trends in absence are better identified and used to inform strategies to improve attendance for this group.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148152
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10288581
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Willie Crawshay
Headteacher	Sarah Disney
Website	www.caston.norfolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT).
- The school is federated with Parker's Church of England Primary Academy. The executive headteacher oversees both schools in the federation.
- Caston Church of England Primary Academy converted to become an academy in October 2020. When its predecessor school, Caston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school has a religious character. Its previous section 48 inspection took place in July 2017. The next section 48 inspection will take place in the next eight years.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast club and wraparound provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and the head of school. They also spoke with representatives from DNEAT including the chief executive officer and the deputy chief executive officer. They also spoke with governors and trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also reviewed curriculum planning in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered 10 responses to the online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also considered survey responses from 13 members of staff.

Inspection team

Marc White, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Brenda Watson

Ofsted Inspector

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