

# Inspection of East Ruston Infant School & Nursery

School Road, East Ruston, Norwich, Norfolk NR12 9JD

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Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The executive headteacher of this school is Sarah Mules. This school is part of Broad Horizons Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Don Evans, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Chris Snudden. The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and one other.

Ofsted has not previously inspected East Ruston Infant School and Nursery as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

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

Overwhelmingly, pupils are happy at this small school that sits at the heart of the community. There is a shared ambition from all staff for pupils to achieve the very best that they can. Pupils enjoy their lessons and typically work hard to reach the expectations the school has of them.

Children make a strong start to school in the Nursery and Reception classes. They quickly learn to love learning. Children rise to the challenges the school sets them. They listen attentively to adults and to each other. Older pupils enjoy playing with younger children. The school playground is a hive of activity where pupils play games and enjoy using the play equipment together.

Being outside and learning in nature is important to everyone here. Pupils love nothing more than being outside. Heading to the nature area or local common for their learning is a highlight of the day. Birdwatching, storytelling and pond dipping in these areas are integral parts of the school curriculum. Pupils learn to be independent when learning outside. They also develop a strong sense of the importance of looking after the world they live in.

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

The school has recently reviewed the curriculum. In most subjects, they have introduced new curriculums. The school has identified the important knowledge pupils will learn from Nursery through to Year 2. This knowledge has been organised into a logical order to fit the mixed-age classes. Pupils have opportunities to build on what they already know and can do. For example, children in the early years learn to count objects and recognise numbers. As pupils secure their understanding of number, they learn to apply this knowledge to complete calculations.

The school and the trust ensure that staff have the subject knowledge they need to teach the curriculum. Staff are skilled at introducing high-quality and subject-specific vocabulary to pupils. In the Nursery, staff carefully narrate children's play. This helps to introduce children to a range of words that they then use themselves. In the Reception class, staff use precise mathematical language. Children develop an understanding of this language. This helps them to be ready for their mathematical learning in Year 1.

Reading is at the centre of the curriculum. In the early years, children learn to love books and stories. They develop their understanding of the sounds that letters make. Staff teach children how to blend these sounds together. This helps children to begin to read new words. In key stage 1, pupils have reading books that are matched well to the sounds they know. This helps them to develop their fluency. Any pupil who finds reading difficult is identified quickly. They then receive effective support to become a more confident and fluent reader.

The school carefully identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Useful training and guidance help staff to meet the pupils' specific needs. Appropriately chosen resources support pupils to access the curriculum. For example, the use of carefully selected objects helps pupils to accurately add and subtract. Pupils with SEND are provided with the same opportunities as their peers.

The wider development of pupils is important to the school. The school's 'life-skills' curriculum teaches pupils about healthy relationships. The use of visitors from different faiths and cultures helps pupils to understand the diverse world they live in. This understanding is developed further through trips and visits. Pupils are very respectful of anyone who is different to them. They treat adults and each other with respect.

The school ensures that attendance is a priority. The school communicates with parents the importance of attending school regularly. There has been a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school. However, there are still some pupils who miss too much school. The school, and the trust, understand the importance of refining the approaches they take to reducing absence.

Monitoring of the new curriculum is in its infancy. While the school has begun to check how well pupils are learning in some subjects, they have not done this across the curriculum. This means the school does not always know where they need to make improvements to how the curriculum is taught.

Those responsible for governance understand what the school does well. They ensure that staff are supported with their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to be a part of the school.

The school works very well with the parental community. Parents are incredibly positive about the support the school gives to their child.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Monitoring of the curriculum is not embedded across all subjects. This means the school does not have as secure an understanding of how well pupils are learning as they might. They also do not always have the information they need to improve. The school, and the trust, should ensure they check with precision how well the curriculum is taught across all subjects. This is so they better understand where they might need to make the necessary improvements.

- There are some pupils who are persistently absent from school. This means they miss important learning. The school, and the trust, should ensure that their systems for securing positive attendance result in reduced levels of absence.

## 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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147322
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288577
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	23
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Chris Snudden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Mules (executive headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.eastrustonschool.co.uk">www.eastrustonschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Broad Horizons Education Trust.
- The executive headteacher is responsible for another school in the trust. Some staff from that school have leadership responsibilities at this school.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school runs nursery provision for children from the age of two to four years old.

## 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 held meetings with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher from the partner school, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, staff, the chair of the local governing committee, the chief executive officer from the trust and an executive director of education from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- Inspectors also considered curriculum design, met with pupils and reviewed pupils' work in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, bullying records, attendance records, pupil records, minutes of local governing committee meetings, school development plans, records of visits from the trust and school policies.
- Inspectors considered 18 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke with parents as they arrived at school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- There were seven responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff. Inspectors also met with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

## **Inspection team**

Michael Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ryan Freeman

Ofsted Inspector

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