

Inspection of a good school: Horsford CofE VA Primary School

Mill Lane, Horsford, Norwich, Norfolk, NR10 3ES

Inspection dates:

21 to 22 November 2023

Outcome

Horsford CofE VA Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Horsford CofE Primary School are happy and safe. They know their teachers care passionately about their physical and emotional well-being. Pupils know they can always seek help from an adult if they ever have a concern.

Pupils demonstrate a love of learning because of the high expectations of their teachers. They are keen to participate. They answer questions enthusiastically. They are eager to explain what they have learned. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. Pupils know their teachers expect them to behave at their very best. As a result, pupils behave consistently well.

Pupils enjoy a rich range of clubs and extra-curricular activities. They play many different sports and compete against pupils from other schools. They sing in national competitions, hip hop dance and learn sign language. These opportunities help pupils build confidence and hone sporting and performing abilities. The 'Charlie Charlie 1' programme ensures older pupils build resilience. They also gain important life skills such as CPR and how to survive in the wilderness. Pupils contribute to their local community by fundraising and visiting older people in care. The majority of parents are very pleased with the education their children receive.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. They have carefully chosen the precise knowledge they want pupils to learn from Reception Year to Year 6. Pupils therefore build increasingly complex knowledge as they mature. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They introduce new knowledge in stages and they explain ideas clearly. Pupils regularly practise and revisit what they have learned before. This helps them to recall knowledge with ease. The curriculum ensures that knowledge in one area of the curriculum often reinforces knowledge in another. For example, pupils in their English lessons read about poverty in the 1800s which enriches their understanding of Victorian Britain in history. Older pupils confidently discuss and debate ideas because they can

apply their learning independently. They work well together, for example, to solve equations in mathematics.

Teachers rigorously check how well pupils are learning. Teachers' skilful questions pick up gaps in pupils' knowledge and misconceptions. They quickly provide pupils with support to help them understand better and gain the knowledge they need.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn well. Leaders work with outside agencies to identify how to adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND. However, leaders do not consistently provide teachers with precise guidance to interpret and deliver this support with sufficient precision. Leaders are working hard to address this.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Standards in phonics in Year 1 have improved and are in line with national averages. Leaders provide training to ensure that most teachers teach reading consistently well. Children, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND), blend new sounds quickly. Pupils receive regular practice of sounds they know. Pupils' reading books are closely matched to their reading level. As a result, pupils read familiar language fluently. Leaders carefully check how well pupils are reading. Pupils receive precise support to help them to catch up if they fall behind.

Some standards in reading tests at key stage 2 in 2023 were lower than the national average. In response, leaders continue to refine and improve the reading curriculum. Pupils read a diverse range of texts. The stories children in Reception hear help them to understand the world around them. Older pupils employ reading strategies to make sense of sophisticated language. Pupils passionately re-tell the stories they read in class. They explain how these texts heighten their awareness of different cultures and global events such as the war in Ukraine.

The school prepares pupils well for life in multicultural Britain and the global world. Pupils are kind, compassionate and respect those who are different from them. They know how to foster positive healthy relationships. They have multiple opportunities to hone leadership skills as heads of house and as library monitors. Pupils vote for representatives on the school council. This helps pupils to learn about democracy.

Leaders work closely with parents. As a result, pupils' attendance continues to increase. Teachers find their workload manageable and leaders supportive. Governors robustly challenge leaders' actions to be sure they are in the pupils' best interests. Governors and leaders understand precisely what the school does well. They know what they need to do to make the school even better. They are well equipped to do this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not rigorously adhere to some recommendations by outside agencies when specifying the support for some pupils with SEND. As a result of this, some pupils with SEND do not receive the precise help they need to access the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that needs for all pupils with SEND are reliably identified and communicate appropriate strategies to staff so that these pupils learn more effectively.

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 6–7 June 2018.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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	141991
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10295081
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	341
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Mrs Sue Hill
Executive headteacher	Mrs Ashley Best-White
Website	www.horsfordprimaryschool.co.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	6 – 7 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Nebula Federation of schools

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspector met with the chair of governors, other governors, a representative from the local authority, the executive headteacher, executive deputies from the Nebula Federation, head of school, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, physical education. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and a review of any curriculum documentation. They also scrutinised other curriculum plans.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils, staff and parents. There were 28 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 0 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey. There were 44 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector considered 43 free-text responses from parents and also spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Adam Cooke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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