

# Inspection of Northway Infant School

Virginia Road, Northway, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 8PT

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since October 2011.

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

Pupils thrive at this highly inclusive and welcoming school. The school is ambitious for all pupils. Everyone within the school and community want pupils to 'SHINE,' and they do. Everyone works together so that all pupils can achieve their very best. Pupils are exceptionally happy, safe and love coming to school.

Pupils meet the high expectations set for them by staff. They succeed both personally and academically. Strong, trusting and supportive relationships are based on mutual respect. Parents overwhelmingly agree. They speak positively about the school with comments such as, 'Truly a fantastic school with phenomenal staff always putting the children first and helping them to SHINE.'

The school has exceptionally high expectations of behaviour. Pupils respond to these very well. The school's approach to 'Be safe, Be ready, Be respectful' is well understood. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy their friendships and take care of one another.

Pupils benefit from a meticulously planned set of wider experiences alongside the academic curriculum. These include visits to places of worship and a wealth of extra-curricular activities. This contributes to an inclusive and aspirational approach for all.

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

The school provides an exceptional quality of education. Everyone involved in the school is determined that all pupils will succeed. The school has an unwavering commitment to provide the very best learning experiences. The school's work is drawn upon by other providers for guidance and the sharing of best practice.

The school provides an innovative and personalised 'SHINE' curriculum. Pupils and their needs are placed firmly at the centre of this curriculum. From the early years, children are immersed in a curriculum that sparks their curiosity and enables them to become confident and independent learners. Subject leaders have considerable expertise. They have thought carefully about the knowledge pupils need to acquire to be successful learners. For example, in music the sequence of learning builds on what pupils know and can do very well. Pupils successfully recall knowledge about musical notation and composers. Across a range of subjects, pupils progress exceptionally well through the curriculum.

The school prioritises reading. There is a sharp focus on the development of children's language and communication skills. Classrooms are full of books. As a result, pupils read widely and often. Phonics is taught with careful precision and enthusiasm by staff. Pupils confidently apply their phonics knowledge when reading. For those who struggle or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), prompt and highly effective support means no child is left behind. Pupils develop a love of reading from the start. They talk confidently about books they listen to in class and about a range of authors. The reading curriculum has a strong impact on

the quality of pupils' writing. Pupils, including children in the early years, are able to use a wide range of vocabulary across the wider curriculum learning.

The school is a calm and purposeful place to learn. Pupils play and interact together with care both inside and outside the classroom. The school has made deliberate decisions to offer pupils an extensive choice of games and activities at social times. Resources such as the toy shed, adventure trail and inspiring adult-led activities contribute to the positive environment.

Staff quickly identify barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. They adapt learning to take account of individual needs so that all pupils can succeed. Staff know pupils well. The school's pastoral offer provides a balance of nurture and challenge so all pupils with SEND progress through the curriculum as well as their peers.

The school goes above and beyond to provide pupils with a wealth of experiences to support their personal development. Pupils learn to be creative, understand the wider world around them, take risks with their learning, and more importantly, be themselves. Meticulous planning of the curriculum enables pupils to seamlessly link their learning to the real world. The careful consideration of knowledge supports their development in becoming model citizens. Pupils take on roles and responsibilities such as house captains and sports councillors at a young age. They are proud of the impact these responsibilities have on others. Pupils have a good understanding of difference. They can explain why it is good to be different and show high respect towards others.

The school takes a well considered approach to staff professional development. This is grounded in the needs of the pupils to have maximum impact on their learning. Staff describe themselves as 'reflective practitioners,' there to ensure all pupils can excel.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115563
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288148
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	100
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Joanne Fay
<b>Headteacher</b>	Danielle Morley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.northwayinfants.co.uk">www.northwayinfants.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 October 2011

## Information about this school

- Northway Infant School is smaller than the average school. There are currently five single-age classes.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## 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 discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, groups of staff, a representative from the local authority and representatives of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited samples of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects. These included music and geography.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 read to an adult.
- 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 considered the 34 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 24 free-text responses and 27 responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector                      His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Hansen    Ofsted Inspector

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