

# Inspection of a good school: Mendham Primary School

Mendham, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0NJ

---

Inspection dates:

25 June 2024

## Outcome

Mendham Primary School continues to be a good school.

The academy head of this school is Simon Lea. This school is part of Consortium Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Martin.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Mendham Primary School is a friendly place. Pupils play well together during social times. They sit, chat and eat sensibly at lunch. They respond well to teachers' guidance in lessons. They listen and behave respectfully. They join in with lesson discussions confidently. In the early years, children are interested in their learning and enthusiastically join in with the well-planned activities. Pupils feel safe and are safe here.

Pupils benefit from the school's high ambitions. The school is clear about what pupils should learn and when. Their knowledge builds over time. Pupils behave and are taught well. Consequently, they learn and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to develop outside the classroom. For instance, they apply for, and take on, leadership positions. They take part in a range of clubs, such as those for sport, films and art. Pupils learn from external visitors, such as about mental health and potential future careers. They share what they have achieved in and out of school in sharing assemblies, attended by parents, staff and pupils. This is a school which helps pupils to experience a rich extra-curricular offer. It helps to broaden their talents and interests.

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

The school clearly sets out the knowledge pupils need to learn and the order in which this is taught. This means teachers know what to teach and when. Therefore, pupils can understand new ideas by building on what they already know. This starts in the early years, meaning children are well prepared for key stage 1. This continues through to Year 6.

Teachers teach the curriculum well. They use the curriculum documentation effectively to make sure pupils learn what they should. They check that pupils understand what they have been taught. They use their understanding of what pupils have learned to adapt their future lessons. As a result of this well-considered curriculum, effective teaching and helpful assessment, pupils learn well.

The school has a strong understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It makes sure effective strategies are put in place to help them. Leaders check the impact of these strategies frequently to ensure that they are working. Where appropriate, they work with external agencies to ensure pupils get the extra help they need. As a result, pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers.

The school brought in a new approach to teaching phonics during this academic year. Children start to learn about letters and the sounds they make from Nursery. The school makes sure that all staff teaching the new phonics approach are trained to do so. The school ensures the books pupils are given to practise reading match the sounds they know. This helps them to develop confidence with their new reading skills. The school uses assessment well to check that pupils learning to read are keeping up. If not, staff step in quickly and give pupils effective, extra help so they can catch up.

Adults mostly teach their lessons well, and consequently pupils learn well. However, occasionally, staff do not teach new skills precisely and allow pupils to become distracted from the task in hand. While pupils respond well to adult guidance to refocus, they do not always secure new learning as well as they should.

The school has successfully improved attendance. Most pupils now attend regularly. This is because the school analyses attendance patterns. It takes effective action to improve attendance when it falls below where it should be.

The school teaches pupils the important aspects of life in modern Britain. It helps them to understand the need to be 'collaborative, respectful and purposeful'. Pupils lead on certain initiatives. For example, pupils deliver some assemblies. They nominate each other for awards, such as for being kind. Pupils give out these awards in assemblies. The school takes pupils on a range of trips, such as the early years visit to the shops and the Year 5 and Year 6 residential. Pupils learn about different cultures. Pupils know it is important to treat others with respect and to be tolerant.

Leaders are considerate of staff well-being and workload. This has a positive impact on staff morale. The school is well supported by the trust, which monitors the school's work closely. For instance, the trust regularly check on the school's work to keep pupils safe.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Sometimes, adults do not ensure pupils complete tasks with focus and precision. This means pupils' can become distracted and their learning is sometimes not as rapid as it should be. The school should make sure adults consistently expect pupils to work with concentration, focus and accuracy.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Mendham Primary School, to be good in July 2013.

## 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>	143069
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323770
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	65
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Steve Martin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon Lea
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.waveneyvalleypartnership.org.uk">www.waveneyvalleypartnership.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school runs before- and after-school clubs for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 (known as the academy head), other leaders of the school, the CEO of the trust, other trust leaders and a trustee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 spoke with pupils and staff. They considered the responses of pupils, staff and parents to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector                      Ofsted Inspector

Charlotte Martin    Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024