

# Inspection of a good school: Norton Canes Primary Academy

School Road, Norton Canes, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 9SQ

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

## Outcome

Norton Canes Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Beth Hadley. This school is part of REAch2 Academy 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), Cathie Paine, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gavin Roberts.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils learn to 'fly high' at Norton Canes. They demonstrate independence and resilience when faced with challenges and show a growing sense of self-belief in their abilities. Pupils feel safe because of the confidence they have that adults will help them when they need support. They learn about risks they can face in the real world and online and know what to do should they encounter difficulties.

Leaders, with the support of the trust, are successfully raising pupils' aspirations, with many pupils gaining new life experiences through the '11 Before 11' programme by the time they leave school. Sleeping under the stars, attending a residential visit to France and attending clubs that develop their talents and interests are just a few of the experiences that pupils enjoy and look forward to.

The majority of pupils behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy it most when their learning challenges them to think deeply. This helps pupils to achieve well. Pupils form positive relationships with their peers and show kindness to each other because staff model this towards them.

Pupils enjoy being pupil leaders. Opportunities to act as mentors to younger children, become air-aware ambassadors or pupil governors are just a few of the ways they support others.

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

Leaders, including the trust, show a commitment to doing their best for the families they serve. They know their community well, and parents agree that the care their children

receive is helping them to thrive. There is a dedicated team of staff, eager to deliver new approaches to the curriculum, and they show a passion to lead subjects for which they hold responsibility. Recent developments to the curriculum have meant that staff are required to deliver new knowledge to deepen pupils' understanding of what they learn. The school is aware that there is ongoing work to do around further subject-specific aspects of the curriculum to ensure that all areas are delivered as intended.

The curriculum is now organised more logically, and the school makes clear the key knowledge that it wants pupils to know and remember. At the start of lessons, staff check what pupils can recall from their previous learning, and pupils are increasingly able to use this to make connections to new learning. This is helping to develop pupils' understanding.

Learning to read is a priority. Most pupils are able to read by the time they leave key stage 1. Pupils who require extra support receive it in a timely way, enabling them to keep up with their peers. Pupils enjoy reading books by different authors and across text types. Younger pupils like it most when teachers read stories to them, or when they share a poem. Pupils in the older years learn to find answers and meaning in what they read because they practise doing so in their learning.

Children in the early years demonstrate a readiness for more formal learning, showing that they can sit and concentrate for longer periods. They learn to solve problems together and develop their language and communication skills through shared discussion about their learning. They develop an understanding of the world around them by exploring outdoor spaces. Here they learn new words and are increasingly able to use these in conversations with their teachers. Children show a kindness in how they interact and are inquisitive when learning new things.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Those with the most complex needs receive the care or personalised support required to help them to develop their confidence and support them when learning. The school works well with outside agencies to form support plans that include personalised targets. These plans enable staff to adapt learning for pupils with SEND so they can make progress in their learning.

Pupils' attendance has improved with the school supporting parents to understand the importance of their children being in school every day. Pupils who were absent from school more frequently are now few in number, which is helping them to keep up with their learning and their social development.

Pupils learn that it is good to be different and that everyone is unique. They know the importance of being tolerant and respectful towards others. Being a police cadet or singing in the local town centre are just a few of the ways they contribute to their local community. Pupils are grateful for the wide range of opportunities they get, and many take part in clubs, such as free-style dance, tag rugby and gardening. They enjoy cooking in their dedicated technology space and sharing their feelings in the 'Thrive' classroom.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Not all staff have received the necessary subject-specific training and support to enable them to deliver the curriculum as intended. As a result, opportunities to deepen pupils' learning and address misconceptions are sometimes missed. The school should ensure that all staff can deliver the curriculum as intended with a secure understanding of the subject-specific content required to do so.

## 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 March 2019.

## 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>	140489
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344033
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	216
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Gavin Roberts
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Cathie Paine
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beth Hadley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.nortoncanesacademy.co.uk">www.nortoncanesacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	12 and 13 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school does not use alternative provision.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- The school is part of the REAch2 Academy Trust.
- The school runs provision for two-year-olds.

## 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 met with a range of leaders, including those responsible for the curriculum, teaching and learning, behaviour, attendance, personal development and safeguarding.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. The inspector also heard a selection of pupils read.
- The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector spoke with the member of the trust board and the deputy director of education.
- The inspector spoke with the chair of the local board and two other governors.
- The inspector considered the survey responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments from parents.
- The inspector evaluated the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Tony Bradshaw, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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