Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Narborough Church of England Primary Academy

Denny's Walk, Narborough, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE32 1TA

Inspection date: 26 November 2024

Outcome

Narborough Church of England Primary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Anne Neary. This school is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Oliver Burwood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by William Crawshay.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Narborough Primary Academy are encouraged to be the best person they can be. Pupils are happy, feel safe and attend very well. By the time pupils move onto their next stage, they develop into responsible, respectful, and well-rounded individuals.

The school encourages pupils to be 'captains of their own learning'. Pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum. They typically show positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils successfully learn the key knowledge and vocabulary in the school curriculum and achieve well.

Playtime is a fun and happy time. Football, netball and imaginative play proceed positively. Older pupils look out for younger pupils and act as excellent role models. Behaviour in class is calm and orderly. Learning is rarely disrupted.

School councillors and house captains value and appreciate their roles. They take on leadership responsibility and have a meaningful voice in school life, including the chance to meet with governors. Trips and experiences are thoughtfully planned to broaden pupils' horizons beyond the local community. Pupils visit the theatre twice a year, while older

pupils develop their life skills and independence through residential trips. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, gain the same opportunities and experiences.

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

Despite several recent staff changes, the school has ensured that pupils continue to access an ambitious curriculum. The school has carefully considered their mixed-aged class profile. Pupils revisit learning routinely. This helps them to learn and remember what is most important. Pupils make effective progress through the different subject curriculum areas.

Children make a positive start in early years. The early years curriculum has been designed with a focus on the key skills that children need to secure first. For example, children begin to learn their letter sounds in Nursery, which helps them prepare for their phonics lessons in Reception. Equally, key number facts are taught regularly. Any child who does not secure these key skills is given extra help to learn them. Children also access meaningful activities to further their learning. For example, children keenly draw their own number tracks using chalk to extend their understanding of early number.

Early reading is a clear priority at this school. Well trained staff teach the school's chosen phonics programme well using their strong subject knowledge. This helps pupils to learn their sounds and apply these when they read well-matched books. The school checks how well pupils are progressing and puts in extra help for any pupil who falls behind. This means pupils typically become confident, fluent readers.

The school's approach to teaching writing is being developed. While pupils write regularly, the expectations in terms of how letters are formed, and the way pupils should present their work, are not clear or consistent. As a result, some pupils have developed errors in the way they write and form sentences to share their learning. This means, on occasion, that pupils do not write with the necessary fluency to write in the detail they are capable of. Pupils do not achieve as highly in their writing as they could.

Adults support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff know their pupils and identify any barriers to learning. This means, where necessary, the curriculum is adapted to meet the specific needs of pupils. This enables pupils with SEND to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Behaviour is managed well. There are clear expectations in place. The school asks pupils to make the right choices and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Pupils generally rise to this and behave well. On occasion, when behaviour falls below expectation, adults support pupils to return to their learning quickly.

The school's work to improve attendance is strong. Leaders are clear that attendance should not be a barrier to learning. They monitor attendance rigorously and identify any pupil at risk of falling below their expectations. They offer the necessary support and challenge to ensure that pupils attend whenever they can. Having not done so in the past, pupils now attend exceptionally well.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond the school. They learn how to respect people from different backgrounds to their own. Pupils are knowledgeable about world religions. They learn how to maintain healthy relationships with others and know how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils know the importance of looking after their physical and mental health.

Those responsible for governance, including the trust, monitor and support the school effectively. They challenge school leaders to continue to make improvements and provide effective staff training to support this process.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school sets inconsistent expectations for pupils' writing across the curriculum. This means that some pupils do not write with the fluency and stamina required to share what they know and remember in an effective way. The school must give pupils further opportunities and clearer expectations to help them to write well across the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness on 12 and 13 September 2018.

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

Unique reference number	142466
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10323759
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Willie Crawshay
CEO of the trust	Oliver Burwood
Headteacher	Anne Neary (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.narvalleyfederation.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Narborough Church of England Primary Academy is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust.
- This school is federated with two other nearby primary schools within the trust. Together they make up the Nar Valley Federation. The executive headteacher and several subject leaders work across the three schools in the federation.
- The school opened a Nursery provision in January 2024.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- This is a Church of England school within the Diocese of Norwich. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in March 2019. The next is due to take place within seven years.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other school leaders. They also met with a representative of the trustees, the chair of the local governing body and members of the trust central leadership team, including the chief executive officer.
- The inspectors focused inspection activity on the following subjects: English and mathematics, and history, physical education and music. For each group of subjects, inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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' interest first.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys, as well as discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alison Hughes	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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