

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

The Street, Lenwade, Norwich, Norfolk NR9 5SD

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Inspection date:

10 December 2024

## **Outcome**

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

The headteacher of this school is Rebecca Newman. 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. The headteacher is also the executive headteacher of this school and is responsible for three others.

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

This small school ensures pupils learn about a much bigger world. Pupils appreciate the school's caring, friendly ethos. Teachers make sure pupils are safe and know how to stay safe, especially online. As a result of their teachers' high expectations, pupils gain much new knowledge and most behave consistently well.

Pupils play well together. They make up imaginative games. Older pupils are positive role models for younger pupils. Sports leaders referee sporting activities on the playground. Pupils listen carefully to others' points of view. They communicate their ideas with clarity.

Pupils build knowledge which prepares them well for their future lives. Pupils learn about ancient Greece and Rome. This helps them to understand democracy. They apply this knowledge to vote for school councillors who represent their views. Pupils also recognise that some people today, and in the past, have not had the same rights. They understand the importance of equality. Visitors, such as British para-Olympians, further reinforce pupils' understanding of difference in society. Pupils embrace opportunities to perform.

Reception-age children enchant the audience in the Nativity play. Older pupils sing at London arenas. The school nurtures empathetic, tolerant and confident young people.

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

The school has an ambitious vision for pupils' lives. The curriculum is logically constructed so that pupils learn new knowledge which builds on prior learning. Teachers present with clarity. They rigorously check pupils' understanding. Teachers provide pupils with support, but they also encourage pupils to work things out for themselves. As a result, pupils are resilient and prepared to learn.

Pupils regularly practise what they have learned before. They remember and apply knowledge well. In geography, for example, pupils share their knowledge of the African continent with enthusiasm. In mathematics, pupils calculate with speed. In groups and independently, pupils discuss their knowledge to solve problems. Furthermore, they compete against other schools in local mathematical challenges.

Learning to read is a high priority for the school. Younger pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), quickly gain sounds and blend them automatically. They use their phonics knowledge to work out how to read new words. The books pupils read are closely matched to pupils' reading level. Pupils therefore read with increased fluency and expression as they move through the school.

As a result of leaders' refinements to the writing curriculum, pupils have a strong grasp of grammatical concepts. They demonstrate this understanding to write in a range of styles. This begins in Reception, where children write letters to Santa. Older pupils craft detailed biographies of significant historical figures, such as Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks. This further reinforces pupils' understanding of the struggles some people face to become equal citizens. At times, some teachers do not systematically check spelling and punctuation errors in written work. Some pupils therefore continue to make the same mistakes. Leaders are aware and have plans to address this.

The school's provision for pupils with SEND is strong. The school accurately identifies pupils' needs. Staff receive appropriate guidance on how best to support pupils with SEND. They apply this guidance with consistency. Leaders review the effectiveness of this support with rigour. Pupils with SEND therefore achieve well. Similarly, when pupils fall behind with their reading and mathematics, they receive swift, precise support to help them learn better and they improve.

Pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes. They are respectful and kind to each other and visitors to the school. They know how to resolve disputes and make amends with maturity. When the behaviour of a small minority of pupils can be more challenging, the school intervenes promptly. They provide these pupils with clear support and pupils' behaviour improves.

While most pupils attend regularly, a minority do not. Absence and persistent absence rates have been above the national average for three years. Leaders take action, but their

analysis of attendance patterns is not as rigorous as it could be. As a result of this, some pupils are absent too often and are not accessing the curriculum as well as they could.

Leaders, the trust and governors robustly evaluate how well other areas of school life are performing. They identify precise areas for development. The trust provides expertise to strengthen school provision and to develop teachers' subject knowledge. Staff find their workload reasonable. They appreciate the training they receive to help them achieve the school's ambitious vision. Leaders lend their support to other schools in the trust. The school hosts reading and mathematics 'cafés' for parents. These help parents to know how to support their children at home better. Parents are very pleased with the education their children receive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. As a result of this, these pupils cannot access the curriculum as well as they could. The school needs to work more closely with parents and analyse attendance with increased rigour to ensure pupils attend more regularly.

## **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 predecessor school, Great Witchingham Church of England Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in November 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 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>	142588
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345420
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	73
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	William Crawshay
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Oliver Burwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Newman
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.edenfederation.co.uk">www.edenfederation.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust.
- The school has a Church of England ethos.
- The school received a section 48 inspection on 6 February 2017. The school is expecting a section 48 inspection in 2025.
- The school makes no use of alternative provision.

## 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the chief executive officer, chair of trustees, other trustees, the chair of governors, other governors, the executive headteacher, the head of school, other leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. The inspectors focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, history and geography. The inspector spoke with subject leaders, visited lessons, met with pupils and staff and considered pupils' work.
- 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 10 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector considered nine free-text responses from parents.

### **Inspection team**

Adam Cooke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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