Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Rudham CofE Primary Academy

School Road, East Rudham, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 8RF

Inspection date: 11 March 2025

Outcome

Rudham C of E Primary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the last inspection.

The headteacher of the school is Belinda Allen. The school is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The Trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Oliver Burwood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Beverly Tilman.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm, friendly school, where everyone is welcome. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they know they are valued as individuals and will be supported to 'flourish in the field of life'. Warm and purposeful relationships lie at the centre of the school's work.

The school wants all pupils to experience success. The high ambition the school has for all pupils reflects this. Pupils meet these high expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well catered for at the school. Staff model the respect they expect pupils to show each other. Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities to look after the younger ones, particularly when eating lunch or during breaktimes.

Pupils feel safe at school and are confident to share their concerns with a trusted adult. They know that they will be listened to and supported. Pupils value the way the school teaches them to stay safe and healthy.

The school places a strong focus on pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities available, such as learning karate and taking part in competitive school matches. This helps pupils develop their confidence and broaden their horizons.

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

The school has an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils in mixed-age classes learn key content in a logical order. There is a strong focus on the teaching of reading and mathematics within a broad and balanced curriculum. The nationally published data does not reflect the strengths of the educational offer within the school. The school has taken decisive action to address a dip in standards last year by ensuring high-quality professional development of staff, raised expectations of behaviour and more support for those pupils who fall behind in their learning. Standards are now higher. Staff focus sharply on raising standards for all pupils through high-quality teaching and using assessment to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Staff have good subject knowledge. Most use appropriate activities to support pupils learning of key knowledge and skills as they progress through school. However, sometimes teachers do not select activities that match pupils' needs or help them build on what they already know so that they learn and remember the curriculum content. This means that the progress pupils make can slow. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Reading is given a high priority at the school, and this enables pupils to learn to read fluently and build their reading comprehension well. Staff deliver the school phonics programme skilfully. They ensure that the books pupils read help them to practise the sounds they need to learn. Pupils at risk of falling behind or who need extra help with their reading are quickly identified and given additional support. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the books that they read and some enjoy reading quietly at breaktime.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and effectively. Staff are supported well to adapt lessons to the needs of pupils who need additional support. This helps pupils with SEND to meet their targets.

In the early years, children are immersed in stories which form the foundation of a range of purposeful activities. Children are supported to develop strong language skills. They improve their confidence, often during time spent learning with older pupils.

Pupils learn to be respectful, show kindness and care for one another. The provision for pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils develop an understanding of their place in society and the wider world. They learn about news from around the world and spend time outdoors, including in the school's forest area. In addition, pupils develop an appreciation of fundamental British values. A wide variety of equipment available at breaktimes, supports productive play. Pupils enjoy the clubs available and appreciate their entry into sports tournaments. They are given numerous opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as organising and leading activities for younger pupils at social times and leading school acts of worship.

Leaders, including those from the local governing body and trust, are highly ambitious for pupils. They know the schools' strengths and areas for development well. The trust provides good levels of challenge and support, ensuring that leaders are held to account for the performance of the school. Leaders manage staff well-being and workload well. Staff feel trusted and part of a strong team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Learning activities do not always match the needs of pupils or help them build on what they already know so that they learn and remember the curriculum content. This can hinder pupils' progress through the curriculum. The school should ensure that the curriculum is being delivered consistently well, so that pupils can know and remember the key knowledge identified in curriculum plans.

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 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness 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

Unique reference number	142852
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10345430
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Beverly Tilman
CEO of the trust	Oliver Burwood
Headteacher	Belinda Allen
Website	hopefederation.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Hope Federation, a group of two primary schools.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT).
- This is the second inspection since it became an academy.
- The school is a Church of England school and is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was on 24 November 2021.

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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the executive deputy headteacher, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with a trustee and the chair of the local governing board.
- The inspector met with the CEO of the trust, and other members of the central team.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also reviewed documentation provided by the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and children; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interest first.
- The inspectors met with groups of staff and considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Duncan Ramsey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Carol Dallas	Ofsted Inspector

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