

Inspection of a good school: Colkirk Church of England Primary Academy

School Road, Colkirk, Fakenham, Norfolk, NR21 7NW

Inspection date:

5 June 2024

Outcome

Colkirk Church of England Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The executive headteacher of this school is Suzannah Hayes. 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 (CEO), Oliver Burwood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by William Crawshay.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at this school. They welcome each other enthusiastically at the start of the day. They are proud to be from Colkirk, but also value being part of a larger federation. Pupils talk with excitement about the federation days when they come together with pupils from the other schools. They also enjoy trips that bring together just the Colkirk community, such as visits to the beach. Pupils have lots of extra educational experiences to enhance the curriculum. There are a wide range of interesting clubs for them to take part in.

The school has raised expectations of what pupils should achieve over the last few years. It has had a sharp focus on ensuring pupils learn well in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils now make appropriate progress in their reading and more learn to read in line with the national expectations.

Pupils work hard in lessons. There is a calm and focused atmosphere. They enjoy the wide range of activities on offer at playtimes. Pupils get on well with the adults in the school and know that there are lots of staff they could talk to if they were worried. Pupils feel very safe.

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

The school has carefully selected a curriculum that ensures clarity in what pupils should learn, and in what order. Leaders consider the needs of each cohort in terms of what they have learned before, as the age mix of each class changes from year to year. Staff have had comprehensive training in how to teach the planned curriculum. Clear teaching has

resulted in pupils becoming confident writers and mathematicians. The wider curriculum is also well constructed. The school has started work to ensure that teachers use assessment effectively across all subjects and classrooms.

Plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are precise and highly focused on the most appropriate support to help them make progress. Staff in classes use this information effectively to adapt teaching. As a result, pupils with SEND learn well.

The school knows that some pupils have gaps in previous learning, for example in the use of pencil grip to ensure good handwriting. The school has put in place actions to improve this. For example, all pupils in the younger year groups practise writing every day as part of phonics work. A high focus on speaking and vocabulary means that pupils use a wide range of interesting and complex words in their writing. They create exciting and engaging stories. However, too many older pupils still do not use punctuation well and this means their writing is not as good as it could be.

Reading is taught well. Teaching is closely matched to pupils' phonics ability. Pupils have high levels of individualised help to move their learning on. Any pupils who did not learn to read well in the past have now caught up because of extra teaching and support. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and they enjoy both classic and modern books.

There are some occasions when the learning of a few pupils in a class is not extended well enough to move their learning on as effectively as it could be. This is particularly the case in less structured learning time. These times are also when some pupils find it harder to behave. When the expectations for behaviour are precise and clear, all pupils behave very well.

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and leaders work closely with families. There is regular communication with the families of the minority of pupils with very poor attendance. As a result, most pupils attend regularly.

Pupils enjoy learning and are knowledgeable about different countries and ways of life. The books their teachers read to them help this, for example learning about ancient Baghdad. Pupils are very clear that everyone is welcome in their school. They talk about how their lessons have helped them understand differences in lifestyles for other people in our country and beyond. Pupils are polite and welcoming. Their voices are heard through their 'ocean' (house) meetings, directly deciding on things such as what large play equipment to buy.

Staff are positive about working in the school. They feel well supported by leaders. Close working with the federated schools means that staff benefit from shared subject expertise. Staff also appreciate the network groups and training that they access from the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils have not been taught punctuation well enough in the past. Too many older pupils cannot use punctuation appropriately for their age. This means that their writing is not as good as it should be. The school needs to address these gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills so that pupils become accurate and competent writers.
- There are some occasions when pupils are not moved on in their learning as well as they should be. This is particularly the case where the learning is less structured, such as through play. Where this is the case, pupils do not make as much progress as they are capable of. The school needs to ensure that all staff are more confident and skilled to identify how they can extend pupils appropriately.

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 January 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	141895
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10323753
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	64
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	William Crawshay
CEO of the trust	Oliver Burwood
Headteacher	Suzannah Hayes
Website	www.unityfederation.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 and 31 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller-than-average primary school.
- The school is federated with two other local primary schools, sharing school leaders and a local governing body. These are Sculthorpe Church of England Primary Academy and Little Snoring Community Primary Academy.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust.
- The school is a Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) was in January 2023. The next inspection will be due within five years of this.
- The school uses one unregistered provider of alternative provision.

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.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, leaders from across the federation and trust and teachers. They spoke to the CEO and representatives from the trustees and local governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. For each subject, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils.
- 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.
- The inspectors took into account the responses to the Ofsted surveys for pupils, parents and staff.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jo Nutbeam

Ofsted Inspector

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