

Inspection of Corby Primary Academy

Butland Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 8QA

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 May 2025

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Kirsty Foley. This school is part of Greenwood 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), Wayne Norrie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christine Joy Hall.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since July 2015. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are friendly and welcoming at Corby Primary Academy. They enjoy school, and their attendance is high. Parents and carers speak highly of the school and the caring and supportive staff. They appreciate the clear communication that the school has put in place and feel well informed to support their child's education.

Pupils achieve well here. Alongside their academic growth, the school ensures that the curriculum enables pupils to develop its values of respect, responsibility and resilience. Pupils are confident and keen learners. They play kindly and cooperatively at playtimes and take care of the play equipment. The school helps pupils think responsibly about their actions and words. The school includes and supports pupils well, including meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school engenders pupils' eagerness to contribute to school life. Pupils are proud to hold roles such as librarian or school councillor. They write letters of application and make presentations to explain why they would be strong candidates. The school trains the play leaders to organise games and activities to improve lunchtimes. It is ensuring more pupils benefit from opportunities like these. Recently, pupils were proud to vote in proper polling stations to elect their brand-new house captains.

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

The school's ambitious curriculum sets out precisely the important knowledge that pupils should learn. The school sequences this knowledge effectively so it builds over time. It integrates complementary trips and experiences to engage pupils and enhance their learning. Leaders are refining aspects of the curriculum to strengthen pupils' knowledge in key areas and enable pupils to connect different areas of their knowledge. Recent improvements to the writing curriculum ensure that pupils develop secure skills in composition alongside foundational skills such as handwriting and spelling.

For the most part, staff implement the breadth of the curriculum effectively because the school introduced a clear structure for them to follow. Staff demonstrate secure subject knowledge, presenting new learning clearly. They ensure pupils have sufficient practice with new learning. This gives pupils confidence when they complete appropriate learning activities. Teaching ensures that pupils revisit their previous learning regularly. Pupils recall with confidence much of what they have learned across the curriculum. However, staff sometimes do not adapt teaching swiftly enough when pupils are ready to move on or to deepen their learning. Where this is the case, learning activities can limit pupils' thinking and understanding. The school has developed several strategies to check pupils' learning. However, this practice is inconsistent. Sometimes, staff do not address pupils' errors or misconceptions quickly enough. In the early years, staff sometimes do not check carefully that children gain the intended learning from activities.

The school provides effective support for pupils with SEND. It has clear systems to ensure pupils' needs are identified swiftly. Staff adjust the curriculum and provide the right

support to pupils where needed. At the same time, they encourage these pupils to learn with increasing independence.

Reading is central to the curriculum. Pupils enjoy daily story time, which nurtures their love of reading. Teachers carefully choose books to hook pupils' interest and develop their knowledge of different authors. Typically, pupils achieve well in phonics and become fluent readers. Staff provide effective support when pupils need extra help. Recently, leaders enhanced staff training and the organisation of teaching phonics to improve pupils' progress through the programme. Typically, staff teach phonics effectively, but sometimes they do not address pupils' errors quickly enough.

The school recently raised its expectations for pupils' behaviour. While teaching pupils these expectations, the school puts in place supportive routines to help pupils reach them. Children start learning these routines in the Nursery Year, and their responsibility gradually increases as they progress through school. Pupils behave sensibly and respectfully in classes and around school. They are proud when staff commend their behaviour and to walk up the 'red carpet' in the celebration assembly.

The personal, social and health education curriculum prepares pupils well for life beyond school. Pupils learn how to stay safe, including online, and develop an understanding of healthy relationships. Along with the school's values, pupils understand fundamental British values and recognise the importance of equality. The school teaches pupils to practise mutual respect and reject discriminatory language effectively.

The trust has robust systems to ensure it fulfils its statutory responsibilities for the school. The newly established school leadership team and the trust have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. Leaders strive for excellence for all pupils, and staff appreciate the clear vision, understand the changes and welcome the strong support and training they receive to implement them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The checks on pupils' learning vary in effectiveness, and sometimes pupils' errors and misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough. In the early years, staff sometimes do not check carefully enough that children engage with learning activities as intended. This leaves some gaps in pupils' learning. The school should ensure pupils' understanding is checked consistently and gaps in learning are addressed in a timely manner.
- Sometimes teaching does not help pupils progress through the curriculum when they are ready to move on or deepen their learning. At times, learning activities limit pupils'

thinking and the depth of their understanding. The school should ensure that staff are confident to use assessment information and adapt the delivery of the curriculum when necessary, ensuring pupils achieve their full potential.

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	139827
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10347571
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christine Joy Hall
CEO of the trust	Wayne Norrie
Principal	Kirsty Foley
Website	www.corbyprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	2 and 3 July 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The principal joined the school in September 2024.
- The school is part of Greenwood Academies Trust.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This is 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 lead inspector met with a member of the board of trustees. She also met with the CEO and other trust representatives.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders of the school and considered a range of documentation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, geography and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. Inspectors also considered evidence about some other curriculum subjects.
- Inspectors listened as some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during breaktimes.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and for staff.

Inspection team

Claire Stylianides, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sally Wicken	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Ashbolt	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Leah	Ofsted Inspector

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