

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: George White Junior School

Silver Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 4RG

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 January 2025

Outcome

George White Junior School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Samantha Petchey. This school is part of The Inclusive Schools 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), Selene Sawyer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Geoff Prosser. The headteacher is also the executive headteacher of this school and is responsible for one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe in this richly diverse school community. Pupils can always seek help from an adult. Staff have pupils' mental and physical well-being at the forefront of their minds. Pupils behave exceptionally well and are ready to learn because of their teachers' high expectations. Pupils know they have a right to a high-quality education. Their teachers provide this. Pupils also understand that less positive behaviours and prejudicial attitudes restrict other people's rights.

Pupils demonstrate tremendous respect for each other, staff and visitors. They listen attentively and take turns to speak. They respond with enthusiasm to their teachers' questions. They discuss and debate ideas with maturity. Pupil ambassadors look out for other pupils. They ensure fair play and intervene to resolve disagreements. They help their friends to appreciate different opinions.

The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and as citizens of the world. Pupils are kind, tolerant, open-minded and expressive. They embrace difference and value other cultures. Pupils have opportunities to lead others and capture the views of their peers. They negotiate improvements to school life with their teachers. Pupils know, therefore, how to use their voice in a democratic society.

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

The school has constructed an ambitious and inclusive curriculum. Teachers have strong subject knowledge because of the training they receive. Teachers ensure that pupils have much practice of what they have learned before. Teachers explain with clarity and check pupils' understanding with rigour. As a result, pupils recall their knowledge accurately and with confidence.

The school has refined the mathematics curriculum in light of some low outcomes in 2024. The knowledge pupils learn now builds in complexity as pupils move through the school. Pupils use correct, subject-specific vocabulary to express their reasoning. They apply their knowledge independently to tackle increasingly demanding mathematical problems.

Reading is a high priority. Teachers adopt a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. This equips pupils with the phonics knowledge and reading strategies to make sense of sophisticated texts. Pupils also gain understanding of global issues such as refugees, poverty and endangered species. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language, read with fluency and considerable expression.

Pupils build a rich vocabulary and grasp grammatical concepts well. This enables them to write at length to describe, explain, persuade and narrate, for example. At times, some teachers do not identify spelling and grammatical errors in some pupils' written work. As a result, pupils continue to make the same mistakes.

The school's provision for pupils with SEND is exemplary. Staff implement precise adaptations to ensure pupils with SEND access the curriculum and achieve well. The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders of the specially resourced provision share their expertise with staff in the school. This enhances teachers' understanding of strategies to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. The school responds with urgency to any pupil who falls behind with their mathematics and reading. Pupils receive precise support to ensure their learning improves.

Pupils enjoy a range of trips and other extra-curricular activities. These experiences enrich pupils' curriculum and cultural knowledge. Pupils love to perform and compete. They sing with joy at school and at regional venues. Pupils grasp rhythm, tempo and musical notation. They learn to play a range of musical instruments.

Staff feel supported to be at their very best. They find their workload reasonable. They understand the reasons behind leaders' decisions. They share the ambitious vision the school has for pupils' lives. Leaders' actions lead to improvement. Pupils now attend more regularly. The trust both supports and challenges leaders. Leaders and the trust have the expertise to develop the school further. Leaders are eager to win over a minority of parents and carers who are less positive about the school. They are well placed to do so.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not identify spelling mistakes, especially in subject-specific vocabulary, and some grammatical errors as rigorously as they could in pupils' written work. As a result of this, some pupils continue to make the same mistakes. The school needs to ensure that teachers systematically tackle errors in pupils' written work and provide pupils with support so that their writing improves.

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 in September 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	144145
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10345489
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	251
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Geoff Prosser
CEO of the trust	Selene Sawyer
Headteacher	Samantha Petchey
Website	www.georgewhitejunior.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a member of The Inclusive Schools Trust.
- The school offers specially resourced provision for up to 10 pupils with SEND from the ages of seven to 11. The specially resourced provision supports pupils with cognitive learning needs.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.

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 inspector met with the CEO, the chair of trustees, other trustees, the headteacher, other leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. The inspector focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, music and science. 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 31 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were 45 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector considered 43 free-text responses from parents.

Inspection team

Adam Cooke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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