

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Northaw Church of England Primary School

Vineyards Road, Northaw, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 4PB

Inspection date:

19 November 2024

Outcome

Northaw Church of England Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in this inclusive and caring school. Pupils feel safe and happy. Guiding principles known as the 6Rs, comprising reasoning, reflection, resilience, resourcefulness, respect and responsibility, underpin all aspects of the school, including the curriculum. Pupils can explain how they put these values into practice. Pupils are kind and supportive of each other. This includes during lessons and at breaktimes. They know that they can talk to adults in school and voice any concerns or worries they may have.

The school has high aspirations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve the best possible outcomes. Over recent years, the school has raised its expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those with SEND, have responded well to these aspirations.

Overall, pupils behave well, showing respect and courtesy to others. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare. Parents and carers are very complimentary about the school. One comment echoed those of many, stating, 'The school provides a family-like, supportive environment for our children.' Pupils enjoy a variety of rich experiences, which broaden their horizons. Pupils can access a wide range of clubs and enjoy taking on extra roles and responsibilities.

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

The school has focused on improving its curriculum in recent years. This has made a considerable impact on pupils' outcomes. The school's curriculum matches the ambition of the national curriculum. Subject curriculums identify the important knowledge that pupils

should learn and when. This begins from the provision for three-year-old children, who settle quickly to learning at the start of their early education. The school has ensured that the planned curriculum enables pupils to build their knowledge and skills throughout the school. Pupils often revisit previous learning. This helps them to remember what they have been taught. Teachers model new learning very well. New content is delivered in manageable chunks. As a result, pupils achieve well.

In most subjects, pupils can recall their learning well, including how it connects to their prior knowledge. Teachers have benefited from training and support that has helped them to develop their subject knowledge. This helps them to deliver the curriculum well, for example by choosing appropriate learning activities. However, in a few subjects, this is not the case. Pupils do not remember their learning as well. Staff do not check closely enough how well pupils are learning. At times, this means that some pupils make errors and have misunderstandings that go unchecked.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. The school works closely with external agencies so that these pupils get the support they need to access the full curriculum. Staff have worked successfully to remove any barriers to pupils' learning that may exist.

The school has prioritised reading. It has constructed the curriculum around well-chosen, high-quality texts. Pupils read widely and often. Much of children's learning in the early years begins with the sharing of plentiful rhymes, stories and songs. Phonics lessons help pupils learn to blend sounds and decode new words. When adults listen to pupils read, they encourage pupils to re-read sentences with increased fluency. If pupils struggle with reading, staff provide targeted and effective support to help them to learn to read well.

Around school, pupils behave well, taking care of each other. Pupils are courteous and well mannered. They learn to share and take turns with others. This adds to the calm atmosphere across the school. Pupils' attendance is much improved over recent years. Most pupils attend school frequently, and the school supports some families where this is not the case.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn how to stay safe and how to look after their health. Pupils deepen their cultural understanding through visits from a range of faith leaders. They develop leadership skills by taking roles as school councillor, reading champion, or digital leader. Pupils raise money for charities and learn to become active citizens in their own communities.

Governors know the school well. They provide support for staff and hold leaders effectively to account. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about being part of a supportive school team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, staff do not check that pupils have learned the intended curriculum. As a result, mistakes are missed and pupils' achievements do not always meet the aspirations of the curriculum. The school should carefully check what pupils know and understand and adapt the curriculum as a result.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in December 2018.

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	117569
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10336972
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Chris Kilgour and Mr Mahesh Gami
Headteacher	James Inglis
Website	www.northawschool.org
Date of previous inspection	18 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is part of the Diocese of St Albans. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was carried out in July 2022.
- There is a before- and an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not use any 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 leaders, including the headteacher. They discussed the curriculum, visited some lessons, spoke with staff and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 examined a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation document, the school development plan and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The inspectors heard a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors met with groups of pupils from different year groups.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the results of Ofsted's survey for staff.

Inspection team

Phil Garnham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Georgina Nutton

Ofsted Inspector

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