

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: North Wootton Academy

Priory Lane, North Wootton, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 3PT

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

North Wootton Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is James Grimsby. The school is part of the Eastern Multi-Academy Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Paul Shanks, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Wilde.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud members of their school and local community. They run happily through the school gates in the morning and are warmly greeted by kind and caring staff. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and school life. They behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils are polite and hold doors open for visitors. Playtimes and lunchtimes are positive. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to play games and socialise in this harmonious place.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement. Pupils enjoy learning an ambitious curriculum that is relevant to their needs and the school's context. Skilled staff in the early years, support children to communicate and extend their use of vocabulary. Older pupils speak confidently and enjoy debating and sharing their opinions on a range of themes. Staff encourage and motivate pupils to achieve well. Pupils take pride in their work and work hard.

Pupils learn about principles such as open-mindedness and understand the importance of staying safe, showing respect and demonstrating kindness towards others. They also recognise the value of citizenship and service. There are many opportunities to participate, including as 'Leaders for Lynn'. Pupils display empathy, understanding and a deep appreciation of teamwork.

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

The school has ensured that the content of the curriculum in all subjects is knowledge rich and ambitious. The curriculum is ordered logically, to help pupils acquire vocabulary and knowledge that builds on previous learning. Nevertheless, in a few subjects, other than English and mathematics, teachers do not revisit the previous content of the curriculum frequently. This makes it harder for pupils to recall past learning and connect ideas and knowledge to deepen their understanding. Consequently, they do not learn as well as they could in these subjects.

Pupils start to learn to read as soon as they start school. The school has a structured and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Skilled staff check regularly the progress that pupils make to embed their reading skills and knowledge. This helps identify gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge quickly. Staff provide extra practise and support for any pupils who need to catch up. They make sure that pupils read books which link precisely to the sounds they are learning. This boosts pupils' confidence and strengthens their understanding and ability to read unfamiliar words. Pupils become fluent and confident readers.

Staff in Reception Year provide well-considered opportunities to develop children's mark making and writing skills. In older year groups, staff build on this very well and ensure that pupils can write at length across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils learn to use and apply features of the texts they read in their own writing.

Well-trained staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have the necessary support and adaptations to access the breadth of the curriculum. Staff encourage pupils to develop their independence and communicate their wishes and feelings confidently. Pupils with SEND achieve success and meet ambitious learning goals.

The word 'teamwork' represents the school's values. Staff recognise pupils for demonstrating these values in their conduct and their approach to learning, for example by being open-minded, or achieving something new. Classrooms are positive environments where pupils learn to communicate their thoughts and opinions with respect and consideration for others. Staff teach pupils how to negotiate and resolve minor disagreements for themselves, often using simple strategies such as 'rock, paper, scissors'.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to contribute to wider school life. These include being well-being leaders, playleaders, house captains, or members of the school parliament. The school acts on pupils' suggestions. Everyone has a voice. Visits to the local food bank and litter picks in the area provide pupils with the opportunity to contribute to their community. Clubs and visits encourage pupils to discover and develop their talents and interests. Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school.

Leaders take pride in their work and are passionate about their areas of responsibility. Subject leaders are knowledgeable. Staff have the time and development they need to fulfil their roles effectively. Their well-being is a priority. The school and trust are focused

on how they can ensure every pupil has the support they need to be a successful learner. They work together to ensure that pupils thrive socially, emotionally and academically.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, teaching does not revisit the previous content of the curriculum regularly. This means that sometimes pupils do not make links between new and prior learning and do not recall important knowledge. Therefore, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in these subjects. The school should ensure that staff help pupils to remember the important knowledge and content of the curriculum in all subjects so that pupils achieve as well as they can across the full range of subjects.

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 February 2020.

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	144020
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10378565
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Wilde
CEO of the trust	Paul Shanks
Principal	James Grimsby
Website	www.northwoottonacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Eastern Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinators, the trust improvement director, the CEO, the chair of the trust and members of the local governing body.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff and some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at social times.
- 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 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. The inspector considered the responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

Inspection team

Oriana Dalton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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