

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

Norwich Road, Tacolneston, Norwich, Norfolk NR16 1AL

Inspection date:

4 March 2025

Outcome

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

The executive headteacher of the school is Andrew Phoenix. The school is part of The Diocese of Norwich St Benet's Multi-Academy 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), Sam Nixon, and overseen by a Board of trustees, chaired by Fred Corbett.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming school that is at the heart of the community. The school expects the best of all pupils. This is evident in the way pupils behave well in class and work hard. Pupils live up to the school's vision of 'shine as bright as the sky' through their achievements, the extensive range of responsibilities they take on and their willingness to be kind to one another.

Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. By the end of their time in school, most pupils achieve well and are ready for the challenges of secondary education. They benefit from a rich range of opportunities to help develop their talents and interests.

A range of trips and visits link well with the curriculum in school, helping to deepen learning. Pupils learn the importance of staying safe online and eating a healthy and balanced diet. Playground 'buddies' support pupils to play happily together at breaktimes. The outdoor area is rich with opportunities for pupils to experience adventurous play, study in the woods or sit quietly in the contemplation area.

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

The school has a broad and ambitious curriculum. It ensures that the curriculum identifies important knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to know in all subjects.

Reception children quickly settle into school life. They follow staff's expectations and concentrate well on a range of purposeful activities. Key knowledge is taught effectively, and children have plenty of opportunities to practise what they have learned.

In some subjects, such as English and mathematics, teachers check pupils' understanding well, using this information to provide extra practice or further teaching when required. However, in some other subjects, teachers do not check carefully that pupils have learned what was intended. Staff then move pupils on to learn new curriculum content too quickly. This means that sometimes pupils develop gaps in their knowledge and struggle to remember key information.

From the early years and throughout the school, phonics is taught effectively. Pupils practise reading books that are well matched to their ability. Familiar sounds and words are recalled at speed. Pupils who fall behind their peers with reading get the help that they need to catch up. As a result, pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need quickly to become confident and fluent readers. Each school day, staff read high-quality books to pupils. These books have been carefully chosen to give pupils knowledge of a wide range of book genres.

The school ensures that the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly and precisely. This information is used to adapt learning effectively and give pupils appropriate support. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils' attendance has improved significantly over recent years because of decisive action taken by school leaders. It has been given a high priority and regular analysis of attendance data helps leaders target support for those pupils who need support to attend school more regularly.

Pupils' behaviour in and around school is polite and kind. Older pupils take pride in supporting younger pupils to feel happy and safe. In class, pupils concentrate well, work hard and engage positively in class discussion. Where behaviour falls below expectations, staff respond quickly with appropriate strategies.

Pupils' wider personal development is a strength of the school. The school's outdoor learning programme supports the development of pupils' confidence, resilience and independence, for example when den building. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to take on responsibilities and to develop their leadership. For example, pupils join the school's ethos committee or take on roles as house captains, librarians and members of the eco-council.

Trust leaders and school governors provide effective challenge and support. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve. They check that the changes needed are being implemented. Staff feel valued and appreciated by school leaders. They know their well-being and workload are carefully considered when changes are made.

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, the school does not make sure that staff check pupils' understanding and recall of key knowledge well. As a result, sometimes, staff do not help pupils to build their understanding on what they already know. The school should check carefully what pupils know and remember. It should act on this information to help pupils to understand more of the curriculum.

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 predecessor school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 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	148995
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10378591
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	90
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Fred Corbett
CEO of the trust	Sam Nixon
Headteacher	Andrew Phoenix
Website	https://tacolneston.norfolk.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Diocese of Norwich St Benet's Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is of a Church of England religious character. The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2024.
- Tacolneston Church of England Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in June 2022. When its predecessor school, Tacolneston Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.

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 the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with the chair of the trust board, the trust CEO and other members of the central trust team.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally during social times.
- The inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- 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.

Inspection team

Duncan Ramsey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Joanna Pedlow

Ofsted Inspector

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