

Inspection of Catfield Voluntary Controlled CofE Primary School

School Lane, Catfield, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 5DA

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Catfield are happy and enjoy school. They are really interested in their learning. Children in the early years settle well and get learning quickly. Leaders are ambitious for what pupils should achieve, and have put in place a comprehensive curriculum. However, pupils do not make the progress that they could in knowing more over time as they move through the school.

Behaviour is calm and settled. A small number of pupils who find it hard to behave are now less disruptive, due to staff working closely with them and families. Pupils enjoy playing with others of all ages on the playground, for example joining skipping games together.

This is a small school, where everyone knows everyone. It works closely with the federated schools so that pupils have experience of being part of a larger community. Pupils take part in sporting and cultural events together. They confidently sing and talk in front of an audience, for example at the Nativity performance.

Bullying rarely happens. Pupils are very clear that they have at least five trusted adults they could go to if they had a problem or a worry. They feel safe.

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

The curriculum is detailed and clear on what leaders expect pupils to learn and when. Some of this is very new. The way that this curriculum is put into practice varies across the school. Not all teachers have the knowledge to precisely plan out work in effective steps across a term. This means that pupils do not always have the building blocks they need to tackle more complex questions. Some activities are not focused enough on the specific knowledge or skills that teachers want pupils to learn.

Leaders have faced a significant amount of staff absence across the federation over the last few years. This has limited their ability to support colleagues to improve their practice. There is now a restructured leadership team, a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and subject leaders in place. These have not yet been able to have demonstrable impact on the quality of education. However, staff across the school feel well supported by leaders. The links between the federated schools mean that teachers in the early years and key stage 1 can plan together and share ideas. This has resulted in stronger planning for English.

The teaching of early reading is now getting pupils to be able to decode words and blend together sounds, supporting them to be fluent readers. Pupils who need additional support to keep up with their peers get it. Children in the early years love hearing and sharing books together. This love of reading does not continue as strongly through the school. Staff are not all as knowledgeable in encouraging pupils

to enjoy and understand texts to a high standard. As a consequence, pupils do not achieve as well in reading as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) now have their needs clearly identified. Plans developed between the SENCo, teachers, parents and pupils make clear what adaptations or extra help pupils should get. The monitoring of the impact of this is at an early stage.

Teachers are not all as skilled at checking what pupils already know, or what they are struggling with in a lesson, as they should be. This means that adaptations for all, including pupils with SEND, are not always as effective as they could be. Although provision in the early years means these children with SEND have their needs met to a very high standard and achieve well, most pupils with SEND have the same gaps in their knowledge as their peers.

Classes are calm and pupils work hard. Records and discussions show that a small number of pupils do, sometimes, struggle with their behaviour. Incidents that disrupt others' learning, and related suspensions, have reduced in number this academic year. Leaders have worked closely with pupils, parents, and staff to create a positive learning environment.

Pupils get lots of opportunities to learn about the world around them, both locally and much wider. They are highly articulate about what they have learned about different relationships and ways of life. They excitedly describe the federation days, where they come together with the other schools, saying that 'you make lots of new friends'. They show their good understanding of values such as kindness and respect through their interactions with each other and visitors.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' knowledge of pupils is excellent. Their record-keeping is highly comprehensive. Staff are well trained, and are updated on key safeguarding messages weekly. This means that staff are highly confident in identifying any risks that pupils may face.

Leaders work very closely with parents and other agencies. They challenge where needed to be sure that every pupil gets the support they need.

Pupils are very well cared for in this school. They are taught well about how to keep themselves safe. They know adults will help them if they are worried, and there are lots of opportunities for talking things through, such as 'draw and talk' and time in the 'burrow' and the 'nest'.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- As pupils move through the school, the teaching of reading does not engage pupils as much as it might. As a result, older pupils are not always interested in the books and texts they read. Leaders need to ensure that staff are confident in how to inspire and enthuse pupils to read widely.
- Teachers do not consistently adapt activities in lessons to match pupils' understanding. This means that pupils do not always make enough progress in knowing more over time. Leaders must ensure that staff precisely identify what pupils know and can do and carefully match learning to this.
- The way that some lessons in a topic are structured does not always enable pupils to learn what they need before tackling more complex questions. This means the aims of the curriculum are not met. Leaders need to make sure that teachers are clear about how to structure learning in every subject.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	121103
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10210942
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sheila Watts
Headteacher	Natalie Butcher
Website	www.swallowtailfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with two other local schools, Hickling Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School and Sutton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School. This is known as the Swallowtail Federation.
- The federation shares an executive headteacher, a deputy headteacher and a SENCo. Subject leaders and other staff also work across the three schools.
- The governing body is shared between the three schools.
- The school has its own breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The nursery (known as pre-school) admits up to 16 children to a mix of morning, afternoon and full-day placements.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in January 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years of that inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff. They met with members of the governing body and spoke to the chair of the governing body and the local authority effectiveness officer by video/phone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and science. For each of these, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at plans and visited some lessons in other curriculum subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and a wide range of safeguarding files. They spoke to leaders, including the designated safeguarding leads, staff, pupils and parents.
- Inspectors considered the 16 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They took the 18 responses to the pupil survey, and the 12 responses to the staff survey, into account.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lynsey Holzer

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022