School report

Inspection of The Nene Infant & Nursery School

Norwich Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 2AP

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

At the Nene Infant and Nursery School, pupils are supported to do their best.

Pupils in the early years and in key stage 1 are made to feel welcome, and they look forward to their school day. Pupils told the inspector that lessons are fun, teachers care for them and that they are expected to work hard.

The school is viewed as being at the heart of the community. Staff have created a nurturing environment that helps all pupils to feel safe and valued. Pupils learn about bullying. They say that it is very rare and always dealt with quickly if it does happen.

Pupils behave well and are polite. They understand the school's values, such as respect, and link these to how they treat one another. In class, pupils concentrate for periods of time and respond well to adult instructions. At breaktimes, the playground is lively, with pupils playing together cooperatively. Pupils enjoy using the equipment in this well-resourced school.

Pupils feel listened to by their teachers. They are given many opportunities to say what they think, for example in class time, through the school council or via regular pupil voice surveys.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum for all subjects that maps out what pupils should know and remember. Delivery of the curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to revisit previous learning. This helps pupils build on this with activities that are adapted to ensure that everyone, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to be successful. While this is the case, on occasions, teachers do not select activities that link closely enough to the curriculum plans. This can hinder how much pupils remember what they have been taught and reduces how well they are able to achieve.

Children in the nursery get off to an excellent start. Leaders have developed a well-considered curriculum with a strong focus on the development of early language and communication skills. Activities at the start of term focus on home life to help children get used to their new environment and settle well. Adults are skilled in encouraging pupils to talk and have conversations. These factors help prepare children ready to start learning the sounds that letters make (phonics) in the Reception Year.

Throughout the whole school, reading is a priority. There has been a significant investment of time and money in resources and books. As a result, pupils love to read. Pupils say they enjoy the class books that are read to them daily. Phonics is consistently well taught. Careful assessment on a daily basis means that any pupil

needing extra support is given it quickly. Consequently, almost all pupils keep up with the ambitious early reading programme and learn to read fluently.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND. They learn well because of clear support plans that are delivered effectively. Teachers adapt the lessons and additional staff help pupils take part in the full range of curriculum activities. This ensures that pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Leaders consider how much pupils know and remember carefully. Teachers check what pupils are learning in lessons and identify any gaps in knowledge regularly. This information is used to inform teaching. Learning is revisited to build on what they have learned before.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities to support pupils' personal development. The curriculum has been planned so that pupils can consider a range of challenging issues, such as the conflict in Ukraine. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain and have a good understanding of the importance of democracy. Pupils develop high levels of tolerance, embracing different cultures.

Leaders strive constantly to keep getting better. As a result, there have been rapid improvements since the previous inspection. Leaders provide a clear vision with high expectations, and this is supported by all staff.

Through their visits and checking of the information they are given, governors hold leaders to account effectively. Leaders appreciate the support they receive from the trust to help them develop and further improve. The trust has a secure oversight of leaders' work; for example, they regularly check that safeguarding arrangements are being rigorously implemented.

Staff morale is high. All staff without exception say that the school is improving and that they feel valued and appreciated by leaders and the school community. They say that their workload is managed effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong safeguarding culture of keeping pupils safe. Regular training provides staff with the information they need to act on any concerns. Thorough records are made of any concerns, and these are revisited regularly to check if any action is needed. Prompt referrals are made when required. Leaders ensure that recruitment checks are carried out rigorously.

Pupils are taught about how to keep safe in a range of situations through assemblies and classroom activities. Pupils are clear about how to stay safe when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few curriculum areas, teachers do not routinely choose appropriate activities to ensure that pupils are taught the essential knowledge they need. This is because teachers do not implement the curriculum detail that leaders intend. Where this happens, it results in pupils not being able to remember the content as well as they do in other curriculum areas. Leaders should provide additional training in these areas and then check that this is having the desired impact for pupils to know and remember more.

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	140174
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10241107
Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Caroline Whalley
Head of School	Samantha Miller
Website	neneandramnothschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Nene Infant and Nursery School is a sponsor-led academy within the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust. It is federated with Ramnoth Junior School, which is inspected separately.
- Children in the nursery attend for part of the day, including the two-year-olds.
- The school is on two sites that are shared with Ramnoth Junior School.
- Leaders do not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team.
- Meetings were held with the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, groups of staff and representatives from the multi-academy trust.

- Deep dives were carried out in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited samples of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school improvement plan, safeguarding records, trust monitoring visits and governing board minutes.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour both in lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by reviewing the six responses and six free-text responses submitted to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of the 22 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey to consider.

Inspection team

Duncan Ramsey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Harrison	Ofsted Inspector

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