Inspection of Toftwood Infant School

School Lane, Toftwood, East Dereham, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1LS

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 2023

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

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Toftwood Infant School is an inclusive school. Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils strive to meet these expectations. They work hard, enjoy their learning and attend well.

Children settle quickly when they join the early years. Staff get to know every child. They establish warm and trusting relationships. Across the school, pupils feel safe. They are confident that the adults in school will help them to sort out any problems they may have.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils strive to earn points and 'Toftwood tokens' for following the 'golden rules'. They know the importance of making the right choices. Pupils enjoy learning together. They play together harmoniously at social times.

Pupils who take on roles and responsibilities are proud to do so. Infant pupils join the 'federation council' and are keen to contribute to making important decisions such as choosing clubs that pupils can attend. The 'playground pals' support to make playtime a better, friendlier time. They encourage pupils to get on well with each other and help to ensure that playtimes are a positive experience for all.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. The mathematics, reading and science curriculums are particularly strong. This is because they are planned and taught with precision. This contributes towards pupils' learning experience being successful. As a result, pupils' knowledge builds over time and they achieve well in these subjects.

Reading is a priority at this school. Pupils begin to learn to read straight away. There is a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. Carefully selected books match the needs of pupils. Pupils are assessed regularly and receive the support they need should they fall behind. They quickly catch up. Pupils talk positively about reading. Pupils read regularly at home. Story time helps to broaden pupils' learning and understanding of different vocabulary.

In a small number of foundation subjects, the curriculum is being reviewed and refined to ensure it is as clearly planned and organised as leaders intend. The planning and progression documents in these subjects are not as clear. As a result, teachers are not able to precisely teach the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn. This means pupils are not always able to make connections to prior learning and build on what they have been taught previously.

The provision for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Individual support plans recognise the pupils' strengths and identify

specific areas where they need additional support. Staff adapt learning tasks to ensure that these pupils are successful in their learning. The school provides the same care and precision for pupils who sometimes struggle with their behaviour. This ensures that these pupils have support so that they have every opportunity to be successful.

In early years, children make an excellent start. Children learn the routines of school quickly and are highly motivated to learn. They secure strong foundations for their future learning through a carefully planned curriculum that fully considers children's needs. This includes a range of well-planned activities and access to a well-resourced environment which enhances their learning experiences. As a result, children make strong progress and achieve well. This ensures that children are fully prepared for the challenges of Year 1.

The school fosters a calm and orderly environment with clear routines and high expectations. This helps pupils get the most out of the curriculum and to concentrate well during lessons. These successful approaches mean pupils can focus on their learning in class.

Pupils benefit from a range of enrichment activities within the curriculum. They enjoy the planned trips and the special themed days. The school provides different clubs based on current pupils' ideas and interests, including the running club and young interpreters' club. Pupils enjoy representing the school in sporting activities. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep safe online and of other cultures and beliefs. This supports pupils to be well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors work hard to support and challenge the school. They receive a wide range of high-quality information from the school. They monitor key areas of school development well and demonstrate an understanding of the school's strengths and next steps.

Staff feel well supported by the school. They know the training and resources that they need to be effective in their work are available to them. Staff are positive about how leaders consider well-being and workload when making decisions.

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 foundation subjects, the curriculum is being developed and refined. In these subjects, guidance is not as clear about the knowledge pupils need to learn. Leaders must ensure that planning is as succinct as it is in most areas of the curriculum so that teachers can teach the appropriate knowledge and

skills precisely. As a result, pupils will be able to learn successfully and build on previous learning in all subjects and, subsequently, achieve consistently well in all areas of the curriculum.

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	121206
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10267855
Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing	Jill Wilson
Executive Headteacher	Joanna Pedlow
Website	www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 February 2010

Information about this school

- The school is federated with the neighbouring junior school. The executive headteacher and the leadership team work across the federation.
- The school has one governing body that operates across both schools in the federation.
- The school uses two registered alternative provision providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, the inclusion leader, subject leaders, staff and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including behaviour logs, attendance records, pupil records, records of trust meetings, minutes from governor meetings, school development plans and school self-evaluation documents.
- Inspectors considered 32 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View. This included 24 comments from parents in the free-text facility.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.
- Inspectors took into account the 31 responses to the Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. Inspectors also met with staff throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Becky Quinn	Ofsted Inspector

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