

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Rothersthorpe Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Rothersthorpe, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN7 3HS

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Inspection date: 7 May 2025

## **Outcome**

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

The head of school is Benjamin Edge. He is also the headteacher of one other school. Both schools are part of Innovate 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), Lindsey Evans, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Karen Falvey.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a small school set in the heart of the local community. Relationships are warm and kind. Staff have created a nurturing environment where pupils feel safe and important. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils follow an ambitious curriculum that emphasises preparing them for their future lives as global citizens.

Pupils understand the meaning behind the school's motto of 'be kind, be creative, be courageous'. They learn to contribute to the school community through the different roles and responsibilities offered, such as being on the school council. They have a strong sense of fairness and of right and wrong. They know adults are there to help with any worries. They are confident to report any rare instances of unkind behaviour because they trust adults to help them sort it out. Equally, parents are confident in the school. They appreciate how their children are kept safe, looked after well and make academic progress.

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

The school has carefully planned the curriculum to build pupils' knowledge over time, starting in the pre-school. Teachers make skilful use of well-chosen resources to help pupils learn and retain key knowledge. The school makes sure that pupils' vocabulary and language are carefully developed so that they can communicate their ideas well. Teachers check pupils' learning regularly during lessons and use appropriate assessments linked to the chosen curriculums. Outcomes in national tests in 2024 for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 compare well with national averages.

The school prioritises teaching phonics. This includes children in the pre-school. Consistent phonics teaching ensures that almost all pupils become fluent and confident readers by the end of Year 1. Teachers check regularly that the pupils are learning new sounds and how pupils write them. Staff provide support for pupils who struggle. Leaders have identified the need for well-matched and progressive phonics support for some pupils in key stage 2 to better support their reading needs. The school promotes the enjoyment of books to help pupils develop a love of reading. Work to develop vocabulary strengthens pupils' comprehension of increasingly challenging texts.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff make adaptations to learning activities, and most pupils with SEND achieve well. The school provides additional emotional support for some pupils. These alternative activities boost pupils' emotional well-being. However, this means that these pupils sometimes miss out on learning in lessons in order to receive this support. This can create gaps in key knowledge for these pupils.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes is cooperative and kind. Pupils understand the importance of the school rules to keep everybody safe. Some of the older pupils have important roles. For example, members of the 'sports crew' organise coaching on key skills for other pupils. Meanwhile, the 'book squad' makes sure that the school library is well run and welcoming for pupils who want to read a book. Pupils make good use of the play equipment in the attractive school grounds.

Pupils want to come to school. The school works with great care and determination to improve the attendance of the few pupils whose families need support with this. As a result, attendance continues to be strong and is improving where it needs to.

There has been an increased emphasis this year on pupils' personal development. The school has introduced new experiences, clubs, activities and responsibilities to help pupils learn how to be positive and active global citizens. For example, pupils have enjoyed the chance to meet real authors and engage in charity work. Pupils on the school council are proud that they have contributed to school improvements, such as introducing new playground equipment. Pupils have a secure understanding of concepts such as democracy. They are respectful and tolerant of people who may be different to themselves. They understand equality and the rule of law.

There is a strong commitment from leaders at all levels to provide a high-quality education. Trustees understand the school well. They have provided effective support for the school during some recent and significant changes in leadership. Staff feel well supported and are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- A very small number of pupils need to continue to learn phonics in key stage 2. The current early reading curriculum has not been designed to meet this need. As such, early reading sessions for these older pupils are not improving their reading as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that there is an appropriate approach in place to support these older pupils in becoming fluent, confident readers.
- The support to help some pupils with SEND to regulate their emotions means they can miss out on key parts of the curriculum. As a result, they develop gaps in their knowledge and do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that appropriate adaptation of the curriculum is in place so that these pupils catch up quickly on any missed key learning.

## **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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, also known as Rothersthorpe Church of England Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in November 2013.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#). This is 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	149282
<b>Local authority</b>	West Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10379613
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	87
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Karen Falvey
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Lindsey Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Benjamin Edge (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rothersthorpeceprimary.net">www.rothersthorpeceprimary.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Innovate Multi Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the head of school, the deputy headteacher, the SEND coordinator and subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust, the CEO and the chair of the local governing body.

- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They held discussions about the curriculum and spoke to staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, at breaktime and at lunchtime. The inspectors spoke with pupils about their views of the school, learning, behaviour and safety.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors met with staff to gather their views of the school.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Ward, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Liz Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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