

Inspection of St Nicholas CE Primary Academy

Woad Farm Road, Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 0EF

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Fiona Booth. This school is part of Infinity Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gavin Booth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sean Westaway.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school. They know the school values of hope, love, curiosity, integrity and unity. They feel part of a community. One pupil commented, 'Everyone knows you... and we are all friends.'

There are high expectations for what pupils can achieve personally and academically. The longer pupils are in the school, the more they learn and remember.

The school promotes positive behaviour and helps pupils to develop a secure understanding of the protected characteristics. This understanding is an important part of the school's behaviour policy. On the rare occasions when something goes wrong, adults help pupils to understand why this has happened and how to make better choices in the future. Pupils behave well. They develop a strong sense of respect for others.

Pupils enjoy a range of wider opportunities. The school has established an entitlement and enrichment programme to ensure that all children and pupils have the chance to 'let their light shine' by broadening their interests and developing their talents. Pupils take part in singing events at the local community centre. Many pupils attend football and dodgeball clubs as well as the chill-out club.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious and clearly identifies the important knowledge that pupils should learn and in what order. In most subjects, this includes adaptations for pupils at this school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Books are at the heart of the early years curriculum. Children become familiar with the books they read throughout the week. They quickly gain confidence in being at school and in how to learn.

Pupils benefit from the advice of knowledgeable teachers. They learn about the significance of Henry VIII and how to use suffixes in their writing. Most pupils, including those with SEND, develop secure knowledge of the subjects they study. They can talk about the Roman and Viking arrivals in Britain. Pupils speak enthusiastically about scientific experiments they have conducted. They can link the dissection of a heart in science lessons with one of the books they are reading in English lessons.

In many subjects, what pupils need to know and understand is precisely identified. However, on occasion, not all staff consistently address any misconceptions pupils may have. Sometimes, pupils do not receive the advice and tasks they need to move their learning on.

Reading is a priority. Children in the early years begin to learn to read as soon as they start school. Staff complete regular training about how to teach children to

read. Most staff teach sessions that help children to develop their phonics knowledge quickly. Pupils who are new to the school and/or new to the English language get the help they need to learn to read. Pupils enjoy reading. They take books home from the library and practise their reading fluency.

Pupils with SEND have their needs promptly identified. The school has developed a 'silver curriculum' that highlights the building blocks of knowledge that all pupils need. This enables staff to focus on helping pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language to gain the understanding they need to build their knowledge over time. This helps all pupils to access the school's ambitious curriculum.

There is a calm atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils value their education. They benefit from extra support with behaviour or social, emotional and mental health needs in the 'lighthouse' room, when necessary.

The provision for pupils' personal development is well considered and ambitious. Pupils develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including online. They visit places of worship, enjoy taking part in poetry events and have opportunities to learn about careers. The school works hard to build positive relationships with the wider community. In the early years, parents and carers have opportunities to 'stay and play' and to see how their children are learning.

There is a strong shared vision at this school. That vision places pupils' experience of education and staff's experience of the workplace at the centre of policies and practices. Staff overwhelmingly say they feel proud of working at this school. They say that they feel respected. The trust has ensured that a range of training is available for all staff. There are clear procedures in place to monitor most elements of the school's provision. In a small number of cases, including in relation to aspects of the curriculum, the checks to evaluate the quality of the provision lack precision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers and teaching assistants do not always precisely link their planning and teaching to pupils' existing knowledge, including by identifying and resolving any misconceptions pupils may have in their learning. As a result, pupils are not always helped to develop their knowledge and skills as effectively as they could be. The school should ensure that planning and teaching are precisely and consistently connected with pupils' existing knowledge and understanding.
- Checks on some aspects of the school's curriculum are not as rigorous as they could be. As a result, the school does not have a complete picture of strengths

and areas for improvement in relation to some areas of the curriculum. The school should ensure that there is precise information held about all aspects of the curriculum to support the work to continue to improve further the quality of education that the pupils access.

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	147447
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10298541
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sean Westaway
CEO of the trust	Gavin Booth
Headteacher	Fiona Booth
Website	https://www.bostonstnicholas.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- As the school is designated as having a religious character it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, most recently in February 2016.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.

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 met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, the chair of trustees, the trust’s chief executive officer, the director of education and the chair of the academy monitoring committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors met with the subject leads and scrutinised curriculum documentation for art and design, music and physical education.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance, personal development and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for the early years and visited the early years setting.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with groups of pupils.
- 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 responses received on Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Matthew Fearn-Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Kyna Adkins	Ofsted Inspector

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