

# Inspection of John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School

Hungate Street, Aylsham, Norwich, Norfolk NR11 6JZ

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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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?**

This school provides a friendly and welcoming environment. It is a place where pupils are happy, safe and enjoy learning. There are caring relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils, including the very youngest children, know there is always someone they can talk to if they have concerns. Most parents hold positive views about the school and describe staff as 'skilled, supportive and encouraging'.

Pupils behave well because school routines are clear to them. The John of Gaunt way includes the '6 R's', such as respect, resilience and responsibility, which are values woven throughout the curriculum. Most pupils try their best to personify these values.

Pupils understand that their actions can affect others, both positively and negatively. Adults teach this in a way that the youngest children can understand. Pupils learn how they can make situations better and solve problems and difficulties.

Pupils learn to be responsible citizens. They contribute to school life by being house captains and members of the school council. Councillors enjoy responsibilities such as choosing which charities to support and collecting 'kindness' pennies. This teaches them to recognise the positive impact their actions can have from the very beginning of their time in school.

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

The schools in this federation work closely together. This relationship has been central to this school's continued development. Staff have worked to secure an ambitious curriculum that stems from the early years through to Year 2. Pupils make links between their current learning and what they have learned before. This helps to consolidate their understanding.

There is a focus on communication and language development as soon as children begin school. They learn to be ready for reading in the Nursery by recognising sounds, reading rhymes and singing songs. All staff understand how to deliver phonics. The school provides books for pupils to practise reading the sounds they have learned. Adults use assessment information well to identify any further support children may need. This helps these pupils to catch up quickly with learning to read.

Pupils have opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills in different subject areas. The quality of this writing is variable. On occasion, teachers' expectations of written work are not high enough. Basic errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling are not always picked up. As a result, some pupils repeat the same errors and do not make enough progress.

Children get off to a flying start in the early years, where their interests help to shape the curriculum. The environment is fun and exciting. Pupils love being in the different outside spaces, exploring and playing together. For example, during their

forest school time, children in the Nursery enjoyed exploring the mud kitchen to prepare food for Santa's reindeer. Staff are highly skilled at developing children's language, knowledge and social skills through their play. As a result, children grow in confidence and are able to choose learning activities for themselves.

The school identifies accurately the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school provides useful information to teachers, which they use to meet pupils' needs. As a result, staff adapt the curriculum to ensure pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Any extra support is effective and provided promptly.

A well-established behaviour system means that pupils understand what is expected of them. The school recognises and celebrates positive behaviour. Pupils try hard to follow the 'golden rules'. They understand the traffic light system for behaviour. Pupils strive to achieve gold to earn a golden ticket. This gives them the chance of winning afternoon tea with their headteacher.

The school has ensured that pupils' personal development is well considered. Staff guide pupils well to build a growing understanding of themselves and the world around them. Pupils understand, at an age-appropriate level, about the differences between themselves and others. They learn about who they are and about managing feelings. Pupils develop their social skills through opportunities, such as performing in plays and welcoming visitors from the local care home.

Governors are knowledgeable and have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths. They check the effectiveness of leaders' actions to further improve the school. Generally, staff feel well supported. They say there is a culture of teamwork and their well-being and workload is a priority. Parents express positive opinions about the school. They comment that their children are happy at John of Gaunt.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- There are inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' written work across the school. This is because not all staff have high expectations of pupils' writing skills. There are occasions when staff do not intervene when pupils are making basic errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. As a result, some pupils go on to repeat these errors in subsequent activities. Leaders need to ensure that staff are consistently identifying and addressing these errors and understand how to support all pupils to develop their writing skills.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 120988   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Norfolk  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10294996   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Nursery/Infant   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Foundation   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 7   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 196  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Jenny Youngs   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Clare Toplis   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.johngaunt.norfolk.sch.uk">www.johngaunt.norfolk.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 3 and 4 March 2020 under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.                  |

## Information about this school

- The school uses two registered alternative providers of education.

## 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 judgment 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 carried out deep dives in in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects, including personal, social and health education, history and writing.
- 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 met the executive headteacher, the headteacher, senior leaders, support staff and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits, lunchtime and playtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school, such as minutes of governor meetings, the school self-evaluation form, school improvement documents and information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text responses. Inspectors met with staff to discuss their workload and well-being. During the inspection, the inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally at social times.

## **Inspection team**

Jo Nutbeam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Tracy Warner

Ofsted Inspector

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