

Inspection of an outstanding school: Thurlstone Primary School

Royd Moor Road, Thurlstone, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S36 9RD

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 November 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy village school that is well regarded by its community. Pupils enjoy attending and say they feel safe. They listen carefully and work hard in lessons. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They meet the high expectations that teachers have of them. As a result, pupils achieve well. Parents praise the school's efforts to help pupils to be ready for their next stage in learning. One parent represented the views of many when they said, 'The staff team are extremely committed to not just the education, but the wider development of children.'

Pupils behave very well in the classroom. They diligently follow the school's new rules, which are 'ready, respectful, safe'. This creates a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils focus on learning. Pupils know what bullying is and the different forms it can take. They confirm that bullying is rare in their school.

Leaders have successfully developed a strong culture of reading. Pupils open the school's inviting library each day so that pupils can read books at lunchtime. Older pupils enjoy reading to younger pupils. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the books and authors they read.

Pupils enjoy taking part in after-school clubs like football and tchoukball. Leaders have introduced a sports club specifically for girls to encourage them to participate in more sporting activities.

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

Leaders have introduced a new curriculum for a number of subjects, such as history. Teachers teach the new curriculum well. As a result, pupils know more and remember more in these subjects. Leaders ensure that teaching pupils about equality is a high

priority in their curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 spoke with maturity about what they have learned about racism and slavery in history lessons.

Children settle into Reception quickly. Teachers establish routines that help children develop strong attitudes to learning. While children make a strong start in Reception, curriculum plans for some subjects in the wider curriculum do not include what pupils learn in Reception. As a result, subject leaders and teachers do not have a clear picture of how the curriculum for early years provides a foundation for what pupils are learning in later years.

Pupils begin to learn to read at the start of the Reception year. Teachers explain new sounds clearly. They give pupils plenty of opportunity to practise reading the new sounds they are learning in words and books. As a result, pupils typically develop fluency and confidence in reading quickly. Pupils who need extra help take part in additional reading sessions to help them catch up. For most pupils these are successful. However, occasionally, the staff who lead these sessions do not use the most efficient strategies to support pupils to read fluently.

Curriculum plans for mathematics clearly identify the knowledge that pupils should learn from Reception to Year 6. Teachers use resources and pictures to help pupils understand mathematical concepts. Staff ask skilful questions to encourage pupils to explain their mathematical thinking and make links with what they already know. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in lessons. Adults take time to give clear explanations to pupils. As a result of a well-planned and well taught curriculum in mathematics, pupils achieve well.

While pupils' behaviour in the classroom is very good, some pupils told the inspector that there can be some occasional boisterous behaviour on the playground that can develop into fighting. This can be worrying for them. Pupils are confident that adults who supervise the playground address this behaviour well when it does happen. However, these adults do not record that the incidents happen, which means that leaders are not aware of them.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' personal development. Pupils debate how to be safe and how to have healthy relationships during weekly personal, social and health education lessons. Leaders have introduced a 'daily mile' to help pupils to stay fit and healthy.

Leaders, including governors, have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas to improve. Governors provide effective support and challenge to school leaders. Staff feel well supported by leaders. They say that leaders try hard to reduce their workload and look after their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's designated leaders for safeguarding are well trained and knowledgeable. They ensure that all staff understand how to identify a pupil who could be at risk of harm.

Staff report any concerns about pupils' safety in a timely manner. Staff work well with other agencies, where necessary, to make sure that vulnerable pupils are safe and that their families have the support they need.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to manage some of the risks they may encounter. Pupils understand how to use the internet safely. Pupils know who to speak to if they have any worries or concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans for subjects in the wider curriculum do not include what children should learn in Reception. As a result, the curriculum in key stage 1 and key stage 2 does not build progressively on what children learn in the early years. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is reviewed and planned so that staff are clear about the progression in each subject and area of learning from the early years through to Year 6.
- There are some inconsistencies in how the curriculum for reading is implemented. A small number of pupils are not learning to read as quickly as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff who teach early reading receive further support so that the school's phonics programme is taught consistently well.
- Some incidents of poor behaviour that happen on the playground are not recorded. As a result, leaders do not have an accurate view of the behaviour of some pupils. Leaders should ensure that processes for recording behaviour incidents are robust so that they are able to analyse any trends in pupils' behaviour and put strategies in place to improve it.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in November 2015.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	106588
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10199469
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tracy Hodgson
Headteacher	Charlotte Gibbins
Website	www.thurlstoneprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 November 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has undergone expansion. There is now one class in each year group from Reception to Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium grant is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education health and care plan is similar to the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspector also looked at the curriculum plans for some other subjects.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and members of the school's leadership team.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector scrutinised documents, including the school's single central record, and spoke to the school's designated safeguarding leader and deputy safeguarding leader.
- The inspector considered 49 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 33 free-text parents' comments. The inspector also reviewed the 12 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Tim Scargill-Knight, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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