

Thringstone Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	119972
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379924
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2012
Lead inspector	Geof Timms

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Hodgman
Headteacher	Ella Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Geof Timms

Additional Inspector

Gwen Onyon

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 18 lessons, taught by seven teachers, for a total of over eight hours, as well as spending other time looking at pupils' work. In addition, meetings were held with staff, a representative from the children's centre, and members of the governing body, as well as pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of assessment data, policies, reports and planning documents. They analysed the responses to 60 parental questionnaires and others from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is smaller than the average-sized primary school. An average proportion of the pupils are currently known to be eligible for free school meals. A below-average proportion are from minority ethnic groups and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average, but high in some year groups. The school meets the current floor standards which are the minimum standards expected by the government for pupils' attainment and progress. A children's centre shares the school site, but this is inspected and reported on separately.

The school has Healthy Schools status, and the Basic Skills and Inclusion awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It has improved since its last inspection, and pupils achieve well thanks to good teaching. Despite some outstanding aspects of leadership, the school is not yet outstanding overall because attainment in mathematics lags behind reading and writing, and not enough teaching is of outstanding quality.
- Children’s progress in the Reception class is good. Older pupils make good progress in reading and writing, and develop good skills to help them read unfamiliar words. In mathematics, not enough pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels. Even so, overall attainment is above average by the time pupils leave the school.
- Increasingly strong teaching is having a positive impact on the progress made by all groups of pupils. However, the school is aware that teachers and other staff do not have sufficient opportunities to spread the existing outstanding practice, or to work alongside and learn from each other as well as from other schools.
- Pupils’ behaviour is good. This has a positive impact on their learning and on how safe they feel at school. Pupils talk positively about how well they get on together and the lack of bullying. Attendance has improved considerably over the last year, reflecting their increasing enjoyment in coming to school.
- The headteacher and the governing body provide outstanding leadership and a clear vision for the school. The senior leadership team is enthusiastic and positive about raising standards. The management of performance is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are closely monitored, but the school has not yet been fully effective in raising standards in mathematics or ensuring that professional development has a sustained impact on teaching, and thus pupils’ progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - helping more of the most able pupils to reach the higher levels
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their calculation skills in practical problem-solving tasks.
- Extend the opportunities for professional development to ensure that staff's skills and talents are fully utilised and existing outstanding practice is spread more widely.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good. Year 6 results were above average in 2011 because of often outstanding teaching. This represents good progress given pupils' starting points, which were below the levels expected nationally. The work seen in lessons and pupils' books shows that progress in reading and writing is good. In mathematics, progress is satisfactory overall and too few pupils are reaching the higher levels. The work done to raise standards in writing by providing more opportunities to talk before committing pen to paper has been successful.

Children's attainment when they start school is now closer to expected levels than it has been in the past. Many children join with good attitudes, social skills and are ready to become effective learners. However, their communication skills are less well developed and they often start school with poor speaking skills, unable to link letters and sounds accurately. The good teaching and well-planned curriculum help reading and writing skills to develop well. The current Year 2 pupils are on track to attain broadly average standards for reading, writing and mathematics. Basic skills are developing well. Pupils' understanding of sounds and letters is satisfactory, and their enjoyment of books is clear. Year 2 pupils have a good ability to sound out a range of polysyllabic words. In Key Stage 2 pupils' progress is good, and in the best lessons outstanding. For example, Year 6 pupils made excellent progress in understanding the structure of a traditional tale through mapping the important events. Attainment in reading is above average by Year 6. In mathematics lessons, the most able pupils are not always given sufficient time to reflect on their learning, or to use their thinking and calculation skills to solve practical problems. Parents and carers are very positive about how well their children are achieving and learning the basic skills.

Well-planned interventions mean that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. There are no significant differences in the progress made by boys and girls, or any other groups.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Quality of teaching

All the teaching observed during the inspection was at least good, and some was outstanding, although this picture is not yet consistent or sustained. Teachers work very closely with their teaching assistants and other support staff. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, the school has recognised that the professional development of all staff is not fully effective in identifying and using their skills and talents. A number of staff made this point themselves through their questionnaires. The school has recently started a project to audit its professional development together with other local schools, although it is too soon to see the impact.

Teachers have improved the way they mark pupils' work. Better feedback now shows them how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Target setting is well matched to pupils' needs, and they are aware of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them. The pupils say they are confident that the teachers help them learn new things and this is evident in the very strong relationships between adults and pupils. All of the parents and carers who completed a questionnaire said that the school meets their individual child's needs. Teachers' lesson planning ensures that a wide range of activities are usually appropriately based on pupils' prior learning and provide sufficient challenge. However, in mathematics there are times when there is less challenge for the most able pupils, especially through opportunities to solve problems.

Children's learning needs in the Reception class are well provided for in a wide range of adult-led and child-initiated activities. In one good session, children practised their writing by creating sentences about animals. This work showed how well their letter formation has developed since the start of the year. Teachers help pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures. This promotes their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are well taught, often through a range of effective interventions on a small group or individual basis. The progress they make is tracked well by staff so that the provision is continually reviewed and revised where necessary.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a harmonious community. Pupils' behaviour around the school is good and they feel safe from bullying, as is evident from questionnaire responses, school records and observations. The vast majority of the pupils are polite and friendly to those they know, and respectful towards visitors. Their good behaviour in lessons helps their learning, and they cooperate and collaborate effectively when the activities give them this opportunity. In Year 2, for example, pairs and small groups worked together well to develop their doubling and halving skills, sharing results and comparing methods in a very mature way. Pupils throughout the school show a pride in their work and enjoy talking about and sharing it. Their enthusiasm for school is reflected in their attendance, which is currently above average.

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The school benefits from the outstanding work of a family liaison worker. She works closely with a growing number of families facing challenging circumstances, running a popular and active breakfast club and liaising with a range of external agencies, including the children's centre, to help all pupils benefit from the school's provision.

Pupils say that behaviour is good in lessons, and usually at other times as well. They have a good understanding of what constitutes different types of bullying, and are confident that if there was any it would be dealt with well by adults. They talk confidently about the adults they trust and would go to if they had a concern. All of the parents and carers who completed the questionnaire said that their children feel safe and almost all say there is a good standard of behaviour.

Leadership and management

The outstanding leadership demonstrated by the headteacher has a very positive impact on achievement and teaching. She has an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, gained through the careful analysis of data. There is a good team spirit and all staff are proud to be members of the school. The senior leaders share a clear vision that is suitably focused on raising standards, and their self-evaluation is accurate. The school has developed excellent links with a school in Ghana and this has an impact on the staff's and pupils' understanding of other cultures. Staff do not get enough opportunities yet to work alongside each other so that the best practice can be spread. The school's leaders are keen to develop staff skills and to ensure that all talents and skills are recognised and fully utilised to support provision and pupils' learning.

The leadership and management of the provision for children in the Reception class are good, and very effective use is made of all staff to observe and assess children's learning. The school has a well-established tracking system that enables staff to see clearly how well their pupils are progressing. This means any underachievement can be quickly recognised and addressed, and extra support and expertise provided to suit the needs of all pupils. This makes a strong contribution to the school's effectiveness at promoting equality and tackling discrimination.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs appropriately. Recent improvements to subject leadership through curriculum teams are having a positive impact on its planning and delivery. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully promoted through a range of opportunities such as fundraising, good links with various institutions in the local community, and a wide range of visits and visitors. The governing body has worked hard since the last inspection to maintain its outstanding work despite a number of changes of membership. Excellent written reports on visits to observe and assess the work of the school, such as the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, or the work to improve attendance, provide it with in-depth information. It ensures that safeguarding arrangements fully meet current government requirements.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thringstone Primary School, Coalville LE67 8LJ

Thank you for the way you welcomed us to your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit, reading your questionnaires and talking to many of you.

Thringstone is a good school. These are the things we liked the most.

- You learn to read and write well, and reach above average standards.
- You make good progress throughout the school.
- The teaching is good and sometimes outstanding.
- Your parents and carers are very positive about the school and how well it keeps you safe and helps you learn.
- You behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The headteacher and the governing body provide outstanding leadership and this is helping the school continue to improve.

These are the things we have asked the school to do to improve things even further.

- Improve the way you use your number skills to solve practical problems in mathematics, so that more of you reach the higher levels.
- Give the teachers and other staff more opportunities to learn from others, use their skills and talents, and spread their excellent skills and share good practice.

Thank you again for your friendliness and help. We hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Thringstone and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms
Lead inspector

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