

Inspection of a good school: Thythorn Field Community Primary School

Bideford Close, Wigston, Leicestershire LE18 2QU

Inspection dates:

24–25 September 2019

Outcome

Thythorn Field Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and want to do well. They are polite and caring. They look after each other in lessons and on the playground. Staff care about pupils. Teachers expect pupils to behave well. Pupils respect their teachers. They listen carefully in lessons. This is particularly impressive given the open-plan layout of the school.

Pupils say that they are kept safe. Bullying happens sometimes, but pupils say that staff sort out any problems. One parent commented, 'My children love all of the staff and feel safe and secure.'

Leaders want pupils to achieve well personally and in their studies. However, in some subjects, leaders do not plan pupils' learning well enough. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders encourage pupils to be resilient and independent. Pupils know that they need to keep going when learning gets hard. Pupils are interested in their learning and they work well together. Pupils take part in lots of different experiences. For instance, last year, pupils camped overnight on the school field to give them confidence before a longer residential trip.

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

Leaders have not made sure that the teaching of reading is effective for older pupils. Teachers do not plan well enough to build on pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Some pupils who have fallen behind are not helped to catch up. They do not achieve as well as they should in reading by the time they leave the school.

Younger pupils learn phonics quickly. Leaders make sure that their books are matched closely to the sounds that they are learning. Many pupils of all ages enjoy reading.

Leaders have not planned what pupils will learn and when in some subjects, including geography. They have not thought about how they will ensure that pupils will know and remember more, particularly those who are disadvantaged.

Some staff have had specific training to help them meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, not all staff are skilled at doing this.

Leaders and governors know what needs to improve. However, their plans do not focus well enough on how their actions will improve the quality of education. They do not check whether what they are doing is working, particularly for pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. These pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy art. Leaders think carefully about what they want pupils to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They encourage pupils to be creative. Pupils talked confidently to me about artists and art from different cultures. They are proud of their work in their books and on display.

In mathematics, teachers know what they need to teach and when. Teachers explain well in lessons. They make sure that pupils understand the most important ideas. Teachers help pupils to develop their spoken answers and their use of the correct subject language. Pupils answer questions confidently. They say that teachers help them to solve problems before they have a go themselves. Pupils enjoy their maths lessons. However, some pupils find the work too easy.

Children in the early years make a good start. They know what teachers expect and behave well. The teaching of reading and early mathematics begins straight away. Parents are full of praise for the Reception class. One commented, 'My child comes home every afternoon excited and happy to share her experiences.' Parents say that staff let them know how well their child is getting on.

Pupils are successful in a number of sports, including girls football. They are excited about their new garden. Reception children want to plant pumpkins. During my visit, I spoke with pupils about their visit to a local theatre to learn about Shakespeare. Pupils said their lines with passion and are looking forward to performing on the stage.

Staff welcome the opportunities they have to improve their teaching. These have been most successful in mathematics. Leaders and the governing body are considerate of staff workload. They reduce unnecessary tasks and give teachers time to check on their subject responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff make sure that pupils are safe and cared for. Leaders provide regular training for staff. Staff understand their responsibilities. They know what to do if they have a concern. Leaders follow up these concerns swiftly and involve other organisations when necessary. They keep detailed records of the checks needed to ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable to work in the school.

Staff teach pupils how to reduce the risks they may face. Pupils learn how to deal with a range of situations. Visitors to school and visits to places such as the 'warning zone' reinforce these messages.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In reading, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. Teachers do not always know what pupils have already learned. They do not recognise when there are gaps in pupils' learning. Leaders need to ensure that teachers fully understand how the reading curriculum is sequenced so that they are clear what pupils should know and by when. Teachers should identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and make sure that they plan activities that help pupils to know and remember more.
- Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils is consistently ambitious, so that they all achieve as well as they should.
- Some staff have had additional training to support pupils with SEND and this has had a positive impact. Leaders should ensure that all staff are equally knowledgeable to help these pupils achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Some pupils find the work in mathematics too easy. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently ambitious to challenge all pupils to achieve as well as they should.
- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is covered in all subjects and that it is well planned, so that it builds pupils' knowledge and skills progressively.
- Leaders do not review the impact of their work. They should ensure that their improvement plans are specific. Governors should ensure that leaders evaluate the impact of their actions and amend their plans to improve the quality of education.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Thythorn Field Community Primary School to be good on 2–3 February 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 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	119993
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10110130
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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Munro
Headteacher	Cary Ralph
Website	www.thythornfield.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 February 2016

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Meetings covered a wide range of areas, including the school's arrangements for safeguarding.
- The inspector looked in detail at reading, mathematics and art. The inspector visited lessons with leaders. The inspector also met with teachers, subject leaders and pupils. She looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the day and considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. She considered a comment from a parent submitted directly to Ofsted. The inspector also considered responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including an evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the school's plan for improvement. The inspector also scrutinised the school's safeguarding systems, records and associated documents.

Inspection team

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

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