

Inspection of a good school: Thameside Primary School

Harley Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire RG4 8DB

Inspection dates:

12–13 November 2019

Outcome

Thameside Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Every pupil is important in this school. Pupils are cared for and feel safe and happy.

Staff want all pupils to do well. They expect pupils to work hard and try their very best in all that they do. Pupils certainly enjoy learning here and behave well. Pupils enjoy playtimes with their friends. They are jolly in classes and other activities during the day. Pupils say that bullying is rare. If bullying does happen, thoughtful support from considerate staff helps to resolve the issues. Pupils are very confident that they would be helped by adults in school to resolve any worries.

Pupils have plentiful opportunities to attend clubs and activities after school. They go on many school trips to support and extend their learning. All pupils experience learning to play a musical instrument.

This is a highly inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported incredibly well.

Parents are very happy with the education that the school provides for their children. Many pupils attend well-organised before-school and after-school provision.

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

Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books. Leaders ensure that pupils read fiction and non-fiction books that also support pupils' writing development. Staff who teach phonics are well trained. They help children straight away in Reception to read and recognise the letters and sounds they need to be better readers. Pupils who need extra support to improve their reading are very well supported. Leaders have thought about the books they want pupils to read across the curriculum. However, they need to consider the sequence of books that pupils read across each year more carefully.

Pupils with SEND really do well in this school. They are happy and fully involved in the day-to-day life of school. Pupils with SEND are supported effectively by the well-planned

curriculum as well as by sensitive help. Leaders take extra steps to make sure that the curriculum for pupils with SEND helps them to thrive and develop their independence. For example, a well-resourced classroom, called the 'Rainbow room', has recently been installed to support pupils with SEND. Here they receive individual and group teaching that is fully aligned with their needs and covers the same learning as their classmates.

Leaders are developing the curriculum effectively. All staff are part of curriculum-focused working parties. Staff value these opportunities to share their expertise and knowledge and to help improve the school even further. Despite developing most of the curriculum well, some subjects are not planned carefully enough to help pupils develop their knowledge over time.

Teachers check frequently what pupils know and understand in their lessons. This is particularly the case in mathematics. As a result, pupils rarely fall behind in mathematics. Indeed, pupils enjoy taking on challenging mathematical problems that teachers have planned for them.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to look after their own personal welfare and development. For example, the curriculum is very well considered to help them learn about their own and others' mental health and well-being. Children learn to sit quietly from an early age. As they get older they are taught to meditate. They do this often and value this space and time for themselves.

Leaders have developed a wide range of learning activities beyond academic subjects for pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to attend many after-school clubs, such as choir and roller-ski. All go on trips and visits. For example, Year 6 visit the local mosque and Year 2 take a trip to the seaside. These activities contribute successfully to pupils' learning, provide opportunities for personal development and help ensure readiness for next steps at school and beyond.

Early years teachers help children settle quickly into school every day. Children know the routines well and follow the instructions of their teachers promptly. Consequently, children practise their numbers 1 to 10 and learn to write their own names quickly. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to help children learn to read in the early years appropriately. However, leaders have not yet developed a coherent enough approach to planning the early years curriculum so that children make the progress they could. In recent years, not enough children have left Reception well enough prepared for Year 1. This situation is improving but is not yet securely good enough.

Pupils' behaviour is good. Leaders have very effective systems in place to help pupils fulfil staffs' high expectations for behaviour in the school. The headteacher leads a very helpful daily lunchtime reflection session for pupils who require additional support with their behaviour. She has a very good overview of how pupils are behaving around the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work very well with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. They have developed robust systems to ensure that pupils' safety and welfare are monitored properly. Staff are well trained and know their safeguarding duties well. They know when and how to report any concerns they might have about a child's welfare. Staff are confident that leaders will address these quickly.

Leaders complete the right checks on adults before they are employed to work with children. Governors fulfil their legal duties to support the effective safeguarding culture within the school well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently planned and sequenced in some subjects. Leaders are acting to plan the curriculum better and are training staff in how to deliver the necessary changes.
- Leaders have developed many opportunities for pupils to read a wide range of books. Sometimes, the sequence of when and why these books are read by pupils is not adequately considered. Leaders need to ensure that the books that pupils read are planned to help pupils build knowledge over time.
- The early years curriculum is not yet planned and sequenced well enough. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is better planned so more children are ready for the move up to Year 1.

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 Thameside Primary School to be good on 2–3 March 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	109800
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10111318
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	393
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dr Elizabeth McCrum
Headteacher	Mrs Sophie Greenaway
Website	www.thamesideprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 March 2016

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since January 2019.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with senior leaders, teachers (some of whom are subject leaders), support staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body. He also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding systems and procedures, including the single central record of checks on adults, and child protection and safeguarding policies. He also met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector reviewed the school's website, publicly available pupil performance information, and other documentation.
- Ninety-three responses to Ofsted's Parent View and 60 free-text views, 30 staff survey responses and 27 pupil survey responses were considered as part of the inspection.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at play time and as they moved around the school.

- The inspector did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. These entailed conversations with senior and subject leaders, lesson visits, conversations with teachers and pupils seen during the lesson visits and looking at the work that pupils completed in their books.

Inspection team

Dylan Davies, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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