

Inspection of Thomas Eaton Primary Academy

Church Street, Wimblington, March, Cambridgeshire PE15 0QS

Inspection dates: 19–20 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected as an academy

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and look after each other. They love all the different clubs and visits they can go on. They are proud of their new school library and their pond.

Leaders want the best for all pupils. They work hard with the trust to improve the school. All staff know the pupils one by one and go out of their way to help them. Teaching has got better since the headteacher arrived. It is not yet strong enough in key stage 1. The teaching of phonics varies. Children sometimes take home books to read that are too hard for them.

Pupils behave well. They are caring and polite. They held open doors for us. Pupils want to learn and try hard. They say bullying hardly ever happens. They know the adults will sort things out if there is any bullying.

Pupils learn well in English and mathematics in key stage 2. Planning in other subjects is at an early stage. Pupils respect others who are different from them. They understand what it is like to live in modern Britain. They know about people who made a difference, such as Florence Nightingale and Nelson Mandela.

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

The trust and the headteacher have given the school a much-needed boost. It is doing better than it used to. They have done much to improve learning in English and mathematics. Teachers have taken on board new ideas. They teach new words to pupils in a fun way. They make sure that pupils know their times tables. In the past, teaching was poor in places. This led to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers are working hard to fill those gaps.

Leaders rightly gave most of their attention to improving English and mathematics. Now they are starting to look at other subjects. This work is very new. It is not clear how teachers plan learning to build pupils' skills in other subjects over time. Leaders have ways to improve this, but it is too soon for them to make a difference.

In key stage 1 the teaching is not strong enough. The work of different adults is not consistent. This means that pupils' learning goes up and down. It is not constant. Pupils' writing is not good enough. Their handwriting is often untidy. They make too many spelling mistakes. They do not have enough time to practise their skills in other subjects. Sometimes pupils become bored or frustrated when the work is too easy or confusing. Then they lose focus.

The teaching of phonics varies. Last year pupils did not do well. It is better this year because teachers are trying out new ideas. Some adults need more training so they can teach phonics really well. The books some pupils take home are not suitable. They do not contain the sounds pupils know. This means pupils find it hard to read

the books.

Children enjoy learning in the early years because teachers make it interesting. They help children make the most of their experiences. Staff know exactly what they want them to learn. They make sure they understand how to get on well with the other children. They loved their topic about castles and dragons. Children were very excited because a dragon had visited and left a footprint. They were busy making him lunch in the mud kitchen. Children build up their skills well. This makes them ready for Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Teachers make sure the work suits them. Support staff are skilled and patient. They give these pupils the right amount of help. Disadvantaged pupils do not miss out on trips or clubs. They attend the breakfast club to make a good start to their day. Nobody feels left out.

Pupils display the attitudes that will help them to learn. The school's 'respect' code gives them the tools they need to succeed. For instance, pupils keep trying and do not give up. They help their friends. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They raise money for those in need. The school council meets to work out how to make the life and work of the school even better.

Leaders are close to the trust. They forge links with other schools to find out what works best. Trustees and governors know the school well. They support and probe. Staff say leaders give them the training they need to do the best they can for all the school's pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All records are accurate and kept up to date. Adults are swift to note any concerns about pupils. Leaders take the necessary action to make sure that pupils are safe. This includes training staff in everything they need to know.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. They know how to keep safe online. For instance, they would not arrange to meet somebody they had met in a chat room. Leaders work closely with social care. Sometimes they have to challenge them to get things done quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not learn to read as well as they should. Early reading is not taught consistently well. Some children take home books to read that include sounds they have not been taught yet. This makes them difficult to read. Leaders need to train staff so that they have the right knowledge and skills to teach reading well. They should make sure that the books children read at home contain the sounds they have been taught.
- It is not always clear how teachers build on what pupils know from one year to the next. The wider curriculum is not sequenced well enough to ensure that pupils build on their prior learning and remember more. Leaders need to embed their plans to review the sequence of learning in subjects beyond English and mathematics. They should ensure that the curriculum is ambitious and engaging enough for all pupils.
- Teaching is not meeting the needs of all pupils in key stage 1. When this happens, some of them become inattentive, and they do not learn as well as they should. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply the skills they have learned in English and mathematics across other subjects. Leaders need to ensure that all teaching in key stage 1 is consistently strong. They should make sure that all pupils can apply their skills in different subjects.

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're 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

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| Unique reference number | 143955 |
| Local authority | Cambridgeshire |
| Inspection number | 10112153 |
| Type of school | Academy sponsor-led |
| School category | Primary |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 129 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Alan Ball |
| Headteacher | Nicola Jones (Head of School) Susannah Connell (Chief Executive Officer) |
| Website | www.thomaseatonschool.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected as an academy |

Information about this school

- The school was sponsored by the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust in February 2017.
- The current headteacher joined in April 2018 from another trust school and became the permanent headteacher in September 2018.
- There have been recent changes to senior and middle leadership roles.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with senior leaders, subject leaders, members of the local governing body, teachers and higher-level teaching assistants to discuss aspects of the school's curriculum and provision.

- We met with representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer and the chair of the trust.
- Reading, writing, mathematics and religious education were considered in greater detail than other subjects in the school. This entailed meeting with leaders to discuss these areas of the curriculum, visiting lessons, talking to teachers to find out how they teach these subjects, looking at pupils' workbooks and speaking to pupils about their learning.
- We met with the designated safeguarding leader to check that safeguarding procedures and processes were effective. We also checked the single central record to ensure that recruitment checks on staff have taken place.
- We observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, lead inspector

Ofsted inspector

Linda Mallison

Ofsted inspector

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