

Inspection of a good school: Thurlestone All Saints Church of England Academy

Thurlestone, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 3NB

Inspection dates:

26 November 2019

Outcome

Thurlestone All Saints Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this friendly and welcoming school. The school's values are the bedrock of life at Thurlestone. Love, honesty, respect, forgiveness, service and thankfulness sum up what it is like to be a pupil at this school. Staff instil these values into pupils as soon as they start their learning journey. This prepares pupils well both socially and academically.

Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and at social times. This is because high expectations are ingrained from the moment pupils start in Reception. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and respond swiftly to adults. They work hard in lessons because they know learning is important. They say that bullying is not acceptable and are adamant that it does not happen. Pupils told us that they feel safe in school and that adults respond quickly to any concerns or worries they may have.

Teachers provide many rich opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. Staff are keen to make sure pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Recently, pupils worked alongside the National Marine Aquarium to promote to the wider world the impact of plastic in the ocean. This is just one of many examples.

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

Recently, there have been many changes in staffing. Many staff are new to the school, including the headteacher. A few parents have found the changes unsettling. Nevertheless, senior leaders, ably supported by leaders from 'Learning Academy Partnership' (the trust) have not let this distract them from their core business. Staff are united and committed to ensuring they provide the best possible deal for pupils.

Reading has a high profile in the school. The moment children enter the Nursery class they are introduced to sounds and books. Teaching staff from Nursery to Year 6 promote their 'five favourite books' to inspire a love of reading. They read to pupils every day in a lively manner. Any pupil who falls behind in their reading is given effective support to catch up. Reading is carefully woven through the curriculum to provide connections to

other subjects. In Year 4 and 5, pupils were able to explain how their class novel, 'When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit', connects to their study of the Second World War. Pupils were able to link their class reading on Hitler's rise to power with the current government elections.

The mathematics curriculum is well organised. Teachers' planning makes sure that pupils' learning builds on what they have already learned. Teachers check pupils' progress and adapt the curriculum where necessary. This enables pupils to apply their knowledge and skills to solve more complex problems. The teaching of early mathematics in Reception provides children with the solid foundations that they need in preparation for Year 1.

In history, teachers ensure that knowledge and skills are taught effectively. The curriculum design caters well for mixed-age classes. Plans are organised over key stages and set out what pupils will learn in each year group. This ensures that pupils carefully build up their knowledge and skills over time.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum motivates pupils to learn. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They have made sure that it is not just about what pupils learn in specific subjects. Pupils are provided with rich experiences that enhance their understanding of society and different cultures.

However, in some subjects, leaders are new to their role. In these subjects, curriculum plans are not as thorough. Leaders recognise this and have put in place systems to improve the curriculum further.

There are very few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, leaders have thought carefully about provision and adjustments needed to the curriculum. For example, pupils who find reading to an adult difficult have the opportunity to read to 'Chewy', the school dog. This enables pupils to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Many pupils are achieving well, and in most cases are achieving as well as their peers. However, this view is not shared by all parents.

In the early years, children are highly motivated to learn. They enjoy the wide range of interesting activities on offer. The promotion of early reading is a thread that weaves throughout both Nursery and Reception classes. The beach hut provides children with an enchanting place to read, write and explore books. The teaching of phonics is effective. This is because staff are well trained. Teachers develop children's early reading skills in a systematic and thorough way. This ensures that children can access the full breadth of the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Leaders regularly check that staff know how to respond to any potential concerns. They are well trained, and their training is regularly updated. Safeguarding records, including checks on staff who work at the school, are stringent. Pupils told us how additional curriculum experiences taught them how to stay safe. They told us how visits from the Plymouth Raiders basketball team deepened their understanding of how to

stay safe outside of school. This includes when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is in place for all subjects. Where curriculum organisation is well designed, pupils know more and remember more. However, it is not yet precisely planned and organised across all subjects. Leaders recognise this and are working methodically through all subjects to ensure that the whole curriculum is well thought out. Therefore, it is imperative that leaders complete their programme of intent so that pupils achieve well across all subjects.
- Many subject leaders are new to their roles. It is critical to the curriculum implementation that senior leaders provide new subject leaders with the necessary skills they need so that they have an effective strategic oversight of their subject. Subject leaders need to ensure that subject-specific content is well organised and successfully implemented. It is vital that leaders continue to build bridges and reach out to the parental community to improve relationships. Leaders and governors should continue to work closely with parents to resolve any remaining concerns.

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 the predecessor school, Thurlestone All Saints Church of England Academy, to be good.

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	144074
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10122370
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	127
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ryan Hewitt
Headteacher	Lesa Garside
Website	www.thurlestone-lap.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in April 2017 when it joined Learning Academy Partnership. The trust comprises of 8 primary schools.
- The current headteacher was appointed September 2019.
- The school was graded outstanding in the last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS), in November 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and several leaders from the trust. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the local governing body, an additional governor and a trustee.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the leader of special educational needs and the early years leader. He also met with a sample of staff from across the school. This included staff who are newly qualified.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, curriculum leaders and teachers to talk about the quality of education.
- Inspectors made visits to classrooms. The headteacher and subject leaders joined

inspectors on most of these visits.

- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in a range of different subjects to see how well the curriculum is applied.
- Documents related to safeguarding were reviewed. Inspectors checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively.
- The lead inspector took account of the 21 responses to Parent View. He also considered the seven responses to the survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of pupils' work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to children read.

Inspection team

Matt Middlemore, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Greenwood

Ofsted Inspector

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