

Inspection of a good school: Trumacar Nursery and Community Primary School

Combermere Road, Higher Heysham, Morecambe, Lancashire LA3 2ST

Inspection dates:

14–15 January 2020

Outcome

Trumacar Nursery and 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 coming to the school and are proud to exhibit the 'Trumacar values'. They particularly enjoy the wide range of activities that are on offer. These include after-school clubs for sport, music and drama. Pupils appreciate the many excursions and visits. These include trips to London and the Lake District.

Expectations for all pupils are high in reading and writing. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave Year 6. However, expectations are not as high in history, geography and religious education (RE). Pupils sometimes do not learn enough. For example, in history, pupils sometimes do not have enough opportunity to develop a deep understanding of what they have studied.

In early years, children do not start as quickly in reading and writing as in other areas. They are well cared for and relationships are strong. However, they do not get enough opportunities to practise their reading and writing from the beginning of Reception.

Pupils told us that they feel safe in the school. They said that behaviour is generally good. They said that bullying is rare. If it does occur it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by adults. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know that staff work hard to keep them safe.

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

The leadership structure of the school has recently changed, because the headteacher has taken on an additional role. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well together. Leaders do not have a clear overview of the whole curriculum, and as a result some subjects, such as history, geography and RE, are not taught in enough detail. Governors have started to review the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders so that

they are clear, but this work is still to be completed. Teachers appreciate leaders' efforts to reduce workload and consider the well-being of staff.

In 2019, pupils achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they left Year 6. Over the last two years, leaders have reviewed the way reading is taught. Pupils are given regular opportunities to practise their reading and comprehension skills. Pupils can talk confidently about the authors they have studied and the books they enjoy.

The delivery of the reading curriculum in the early years is not as strong. There is a well-sequenced phonics programme; however, there is no sense of urgency about how rapidly phonics is introduced at the start of Reception. If children fall behind, teachers do not always have effective strategies to allow them to catch up quickly. Results in the Year 1 phonics check were below the national average in 2019.

The writing curriculum is ambitious for all pupils in Years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are given the opportunity to write regularly. The writing they produce is interesting, well structured and presented neatly. In early years, the curriculum for writing is less ambitious, because teachers do not have high enough expectations of what children can achieve.

Leaders' focus on actions to improve standards in writing and mathematics since the last inspection has been to the detriment of subjects such as history and geography. Leaders reviewed the curriculum. They reviewed the topics that were taught in each subject and the skills and knowledge that they wanted pupils to learn. The history, geography and RE curriculums are not sufficiently ambitious. For example, in history the requirements of the national curriculum are not met. Pupils are not given appropriate opportunity to study history topics in depth. Teachers do not make sure that pupils know more and remember more.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They know that their children are well looked after and they very much appreciate the family feel at Trumacar. A comment that typifies parents' views is: 'Our son was immediately welcomed, supported and encouraged to become a true Trumacarian.'

Pupils are given many opportunities to study beyond the academic curriculum. There are many music and drama activities. Pupils take part in ukulele lessons, school productions and choral singing. Pupils raise money for charities on a regular basis, including for national and local organisations.

Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to their learning. They are well-mannered around the school. Pupils said that everyone tries to get along and demonstrate good behaviour. They said if this does not happen adults help them to improve their behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and receive regular updates. They know what to do if they are worried about a pupil. Leaders, including governors, ensure that the systems for recruiting new staff are robust. All the appropriate checks are carried out on staff. Leaders work closely with several agencies to support families. The school often offers advice to other schools about how to support pupils and their families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For the most part, the curriculum is well planned. However, in history, geography and RE, the planning is not ambitious enough for all pupils. This means that pupils are not able to learn more and remember more. Leaders should review their curriculum planning to make sure that pupils gain a deeper body of knowledge over time.
- Expectations of what children can achieve in the early years are not high enough. The teaching of phonics is not introduced quickly enough at the start of Reception. This means that children do not achieve as well as they could in reading. Furthermore, the strategies used to help children catch up quickly, if they fall behind, are not sufficient. Leaders should ensure that systematic phonics teaching is introduced right from the start and that effective interventions are put in place to help children learn to read.

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 Trumacar Nursery and Community Primary School to be good on 12–13 January 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 the school and 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	119272
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10111027
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	386
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Summerfield
Headteacher	Paul Slater
Website	www.trumacar.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 January 2016

Information about this school

- Several staff have joined the school since the previous inspection. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteacher was responsible for the daily running of the school for two days a week, while the substantive headteacher worked elsewhere.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and members of the governing body. I also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- I talked with pupils in meetings and around the school. I listened to pupils read.
- I considered 66 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents and the free-text responses. There were 22 responses to the staff questionnaire and three responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- I looked at the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation document.
- I reviewed a range of documentation about the school. This included information about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff and documents related to support for pupils.

- As part of the inspection, I considered how well phonics and reading were taught. I also considered how well writing and history were taught. I visited lessons with leaders and looked at pupils' work. I met with some pupils from the lesson visits to discuss their learning. I discussed the curriculum in these subjects with teachers and leaders.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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