

Inspection of a good school: Thames View Primary School

Bloors Lane, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent ME8 7DX

Inspection dates:

14–15 January 2020

Outcome

Thames View 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?

Since the last inspection, pupils have not achieved as highly as they could. Standards have declined. Since September, however, leaders have made improvements across the school and are raising staff expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils, particularly those in key stage 2, relish the new challenges this presents. They enjoy learning and take pride in their work. Most pupils present their work with great care.

Pupils feel safe and happy in school. They move around the school sensibly. They interact with one another in a friendly manner, chatting happily in the lunch hall and playing together nicely in the playground. Their environmental work, such as reducing plastic use and writing to the prime minister with their recycling suggestions, demonstrates their desire to make their mark on the world.

Pupils say that unkind behaviour and name-calling happens occasionally. Pupils are increasingly confident that when this happens adults in school will sort it out quickly. The introduction of the 'listening ear' has helped with this. Pupils value the opportunity to talk to the school's pastoral support liaison worker about their worries. They say this helps them to sort out their problems and to feel better.

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

Since September, the new headteacher has wasted no time in tackling the school's weaknesses. She has the support of a committed team of staff. They are passionate about delivering high-quality provision for pupils. Things are beginning to improve quickly. However, these changes are relatively recent and have yet to have enough impact to reach leaders' ambitious goals.

Leaders have planned in detail what they want pupils to learn in some subjects. For example, in reading, leaders have carefully planned the teaching of phonics. Teachers

have strong subject knowledge. They plan activities that encourage pupils to be keen readers. However, in key stage 1, some staff have not had sufficient training to help pupils who have fallen behind in phonics. Sometimes, teachers give pupils books to read that do not match their ability. When this happens, pupils struggle to read unknown words. As pupils move into key stage 2, teachers select books that challenge pupils' thinking. They ask questions that probe pupils' understanding and develop their reading skills well. Pupils develop positive attitudes to reading.

The planning of the curriculum in foundation subjects is in the early stages of development. Leaders are currently reviewing the curriculum in geography and computing. However, they have not yet planned in enough detail the curriculum in art and design; design and technology; and modern foreign languages. Pupils do not learn as well as they could in these subjects. Where leaders have set higher expectations for pupils in these subjects, pupils are beginning to develop a much deeper understanding of important concepts. For example, in geography, pupils in Year 6 were able to explain their understanding of different climates in impressive detail.

Pupils do not learn as well as they could in all subjects. Some teachers plan learning that makes pupils think deeply. Pupils in these classes concentrate on their work with perseverance. Some teachers, however, do not help pupils to practise their skills or learn important knowledge well enough. When this happens, pupils lose interest in their learning and they become distracted. While their behaviour rarely becomes disruptive, these pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. The inclusions manager uses assessment to plan effective support for these pupils. In lessons, pupils with SEND are supported with a range of resources so that they are able to access the curriculum fully.

Adults in the Nursery have created an inviting, nurturing place for children to learn. They support children with their learning and development well. Adults ask questions to challenge children's thinking. They offer encouragement and gentle reminders when needed. As a result, children in Nursery Year get off to a positive start with their learning.

Leaders provide a range of activities that develop pupils' citizenship skills. Pupils learn to become responsible members of the community. For example, pupils have developed a sense of responsibility to protect the environment. They have considered the actions they could take to reduce plastic use. They also wrote to the prime minister asking for his support with this. In another community event, pupils planned a 'harvest tea' for local people. This included members of a nursing home. Pupils decorated tables, baked food and entertained their guests.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created an environment where pupils' safety and welfare are the number one priority for everyone. They have trained all staff so that they know what to do if they

have concerns about a child's welfare. Leaders have recently appointed a new pastoral liaison support worker (PLSW). The PLSW helps vulnerable pupils and families so that they receive the extra help they need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when using technology including when using social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While leaders have developed detailed curriculum plans for some subjects, they do not yet have these in place for all subjects and not all teachers implement the planned curriculum effectively enough. As a result, pupils are not achieving as highly as they could in all subjects. Leaders need to ensure that the sequence of learning is planned and implemented consistently well in all subjects.
- Some staff do not have the subject knowledge they need to teach phonics effectively enough and to identify and support pupils who need to catch up. Consequently, not all pupils acquire the necessary phonics knowledge to become confident readers. Leaders need to make sure that all staff working with pupils have the training they need to be able to deliver phonics teaching well and provide effective additional support.
- The school's reading books are not yet organised precisely enough to match the order in which phonics are taught. As a result, pupils are sometimes given books that contain words they struggle to decode. Leaders have begun to work on addressing this, looking at how to better organise the early reading books. This work needs to be completed quickly so that pupils can be given books that closely match their ability and enable them to practise the phonics they have been taught.

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, Thames View Primary School, to be good on 17–18 June 2015.

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	144132
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10122240
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	467
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mr Dan McDonald
Headteacher	Mrs Deanne Daburn
Website	www.thamesviewprimary.medway.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Thames View Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 April 2017, joining The Howard Academy Trust (THAT). When its predecessor school, Thames View Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is governed by a local academy board. The academy board members are accountable to The Howard Academy Trust board of directors for standards in the school.
- The school offers nursery provision for three- to four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the inclusions manager. I held a meeting with two representatives of the local academy board and held a telephone conversation with the chair of the board of directors for THAT. I also met with the chief executive officer, the executive headteacher and the director of education for THAT.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. This included meeting with the curriculum leader and subject leaders for these subjects, visiting

lessons, talking to pupils, listening to pupils read, speaking with teachers and looking at pupils' work.

- I met with the school's designated safeguarding leads and scrutinised the school's safeguarding records. This included a check on the single central record of recruitment checks on adults working with pupils.
- During breaktime and lunchtime, I observed pupils' behaviour and spoke to pupils informally. I also met formally with groups of pupils. 143 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire were also considered.
- I reviewed 51 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 26 free-text comments. I also considered other feedback from parents, including meeting with parents at the beginning of the first day.
- I met with a range of staff during the inspection, including teachers and support staff. Forty-eight staff responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Leah Goulding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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