

Inspection of a good school: Tang Hall Primary Academy

Sixth Avenue, York, North Yorkshire YO31 0UT

Inspection dates:

25–26 February 2020

Outcome

Tang Hall Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

However, the inspector has some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils enjoy their learning. There are a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities for pupils to take part in. Some of these clubs have been set up as a result of requests from pupils.

Pupils enjoy reading. They read regularly in school. There is a strong culture of reading across the school. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about reading. They particularly enjoy when their teacher reads to them at the end of the school day.

Bullying does happen at times. Pupils understand the difference between bullying and falling out. Most pupils say that staff deal with bullying when it happens. However, some pupils and parents believe that bullying can persist. A small number of pupils do not feel safe as a result.

Most pupils behave well. However, a small minority of pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Pupils say that there is sometimes pushing and shoving at playtimes.

In mathematics, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Until recently, staff have not had high enough expectations of what pupils should achieve. Pupils find it difficult to remember what they have learned in mathematics.

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

The school has recently experienced a lot of changes in leadership. Leaders say this has been unsettling for pupils. The new headteacher has quickly identified the areas that the school needs to improve. Staff are fully behind her vision to improve the school.

Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics. There have not been enough opportunities for pupils to review and revisit their learning or apply their mathematical skills to more complex tasks. Pupils find it difficult to recall what they have learned in mathematics. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve in mathematics have not been high enough. As a result, the quality of pupils' work in mathematics is not good enough. In the last few weeks, a leader from the Trust has started to support the school to improve the mathematics curriculum. It is too early to judge the impact of this support.

Recently, leaders have reviewed the curriculum. They have considered the facts that pupils should remember in history and geography. The new curriculum is helping pupils to improve their knowledge in history. For example, Year 4 pupils were able to explain what they had learned about the Wars of the Roses. However, curriculum plans are not ambitious enough. For example, in history there are limited opportunities for pupils to discuss the views of historians. Pupils' writing in history tends to focus on developing their English skills rather than writing in response to historical enquiry questions. Teachers are not developing well enough pupils' understanding of historical concepts and vocabulary.

By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in reading and writing. In these subjects, they are well prepared for secondary school. Reading is prioritised. Pupils enjoy reading. Teachers read enthusiastically to children. Younger pupils talk about the stories teachers read to them. The teaching of phonics is effective. Staff ensure that the books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they know. Staff receive training in the school's phonics programme. Adults help pupils to use their phonics to sound out words that are unfamiliar to them. Leaders ensure effective support for weaker readers.

Adults know what they need to do to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND achieve well by the end of Year 6. However, targets on support plans are not precise enough, particularly in reading.

There are a wide range of enrichment opportunities to enhance the curriculum. Pupils get involved in their local community. They raise money for charity and sing at an elderly residents home. There is an active student council.

Most pupils behave well. However, a small minority of pupils can disrupt the learning of others. A small minority of parents expressed concern about how the school deals with bullying and behaviour. Some pupils told the inspector that although adults deal with bullying, it can still persist.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel well supported by senior leaders and the Trust. Leaders and governors are considerate of staff well-being and workload. Staff morale is high.

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that mathematics and pupils' behaviour may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand the important role they play in safeguarding pupils. Leaders ensure that staff training is kept up to date. They regularly test out staff's understanding of the training they have received. Staff ensure that any concerns are logged about pupils and passed on to the safeguarding leader. Leaders and staff have a clear understanding of the local safeguarding risks. Leaders refer concerns quickly to external agencies when necessary. Risk assessments are put in place for pupils who show challenging behaviour. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics. Teachers have not had high enough expectations of what pupils should and can achieve in mathematics. Leaders should ensure that recent plans to improve the mathematics curriculum are implemented fully. This includes subject-specific training for staff and ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Leaders should also ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to revisit and review the most important subject content so that pupils remember more over time.
- Leaders have reviewed the curriculum in all of the foundation subjects. Curriculum plans are in place for all subjects and are now being implemented. However, some of these plans are not ambitious enough. Leaders have not thought enough about the crucial knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils must learn. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans in subjects such as history and geography clearly identify the substantive and disciplinary knowledge that pupils must learn.
- Pupils with SEND are well supported. However, targets on support plans for SEND pupils are not consistently precise. Leaders should ensure that targets are specific, particularly in reading, so that all staff are clear about how to support pupils' needs.
- Most pupils behave well. However, a very small minority of pupils can disrupt the learning of others. Leaders should ensure that the school's behaviour strategies enable all pupils to learn without interruption. Leaders should also ensure that when action is taken to address any bullying issues, bullying does not continue.

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 or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence 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, Tang Hall Primary School, to be good in December 2012.

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	143509
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10121775
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	256
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Hattam
Headteacher	Johanna Slack
Website	www.tanghallprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is the first inspection of Tang Hall Primary Academy since it became an academy in May 2017.
- The school is a member of Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is higher than the national average.
- The new headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- The school uses The Danesgate Community for alternative education provision. This is a registered school.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and leaders from the Trust. I also met with the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust and the chair of trustees. I met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. I met with a representative from the local authority. I held a telephone call with the alternative education provider used by the school.

- I considered the 26 responses to Ofsted’s survey, Parent View. I also took into account the 137 responses to the pupil survey and 21 responses to the staff survey. I spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.
- I spoke to a number of staff about how leaders support their workload and the professional development that they receive. I also spoke to a range of staff about their role in keeping pupils safe.
- The inspection focused particularly on reading, mathematics and history. I visited lessons and scrutinised pupils’ work with curriculum leaders. I talked to pupils, teachers and teaching assistants. I listened to some pupils read. During the inspection, I visited all classes, including Nursery and Reception.

Inspection team

Michele Costello, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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