

Inspection of a good school: Thrunscoe Primary and Nursery Academy

Trinity Road, Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire DN35 8UL

Inspection dates: 11–12 March 2020

Outcome

Thrunscoe Primary and Nursery Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and caring school. Pupils enjoy working with each other and their teachers. Leaders have worked hard to make changes to improve pupils' learning experiences. They know there is still more work to do, but leaders know what needs doing and how to do it. Pupils told me that they feel well looked after and safe in school.

Teachers and staff work hard with all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils understand the expectations of them and will try hard to meet them. The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers and staff help pupils by giving them very clear structures in lessons. All pupils I spoke to told me that they do not believe bullying is a problem, but if it happens teachers sort it out.

The school offers pupils lots of opportunities for learning beyond their lessons. Pupils enjoy out-of-school visits and cultural experiences. Visitors to the school add to pupils' learning. There are regular residential experiences too. Pupils are very enthusiastic about these. It is clear that they appreciate the extra opportunities the school provides for them.

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

The curriculum is organised so that learning is in a sensible order. Teachers' plans make it clear what to teach pupils and when. Teachers have thought about which bits of knowledge will be the most important. They are not afraid of revisiting this knowledge so pupils remember it.

Leaders encourage pupils to read for pleasure and for purpose. However, there is more work to do to improve this further. Every classroom has a reading area, and pupils are encouraged from an early age to select books to read or look at. Pupils learn phonics from an early age too. Teachers choose reading books so they match the phonics skills of the pupils. The school has recently introduced a new phonics scheme. However, teachers,

staff and some pupils have had to change from one scheme to another. This has caused some inconsistencies in the way pupils learn their phonics. In some cases, there is not enough focus on developing pupils' understanding of important vocabulary.

Throughout the curriculum, teachers link reading and writing. For example, in history, pupils may study the great fire of London. They deepen their learning by writing about it from the point of view of an eyewitness. The quality of pupils' writing is variable though. Teachers do not always correct the spelling of key vocabulary.

In mathematics, pupils learn in a logical order, building up their skills. A new scheme helps pupils to develop their mathematics skills in greater depth. They solve problems and reason using these skills.

Assessment identifies gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers can then make the best use of this information. Each subject area uses regular assessment, so teachers can spot if any pupil is falling behind with their work.

Pupils with SEND get the support they need to complete their work successfully. Assessment of their needs takes place at an early stage. Parents and pupils are part of this process. Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils get the support they need for their learning and school experience too.

Pupils enjoy activities beyond their lessons. They are calm and behave around the school during social times. Pupils also take part in educational visits and activities. There is a breakfast club, which is popular. Pupils take part in the academy council. They understand about democracy. They have written to their local member of parliament about community issues.

Not all pupils attend school as often as they should. The school has worked hard to build up positive relationships with all parents, including those of pupils who are absent too often. Leaders impress on pupils and parents the importance of good attendance. But attendance needs to improve further.

Children are safe and happy in the early years and nursery provision. Leaders want children to learn through structured play and activity. Inside and outside learning spaces are being developed to encourage this. These spaces help children to develop their social skills and their skills in reading, writing and number.

Leaders are accurate in their evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have identified their priorities for improvement. The governing body is undergoing change. The school is seeking to recruit new governors who have the skills and knowledge to hold leaders to account more effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders ensure that those pupils who are vulnerable are safe. The register which records the checks on all adults in school is compliant with all the legal requirements. These checks make sure that the adults the school employs are suitable to work with children. Staff and governors are regularly trained, using up-to-date materials and documents. There is a culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Pupils feel safe, and they are confident that staff will support them and help them with any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The way in which phonics skills are developed is inconsistent. This is due, in part, to a change in phonics scheme and staff training needs. As a result, although pupils are making good progress in their phonics skills, they could be making better progress than they are. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the training they require to deliver phonics effectively so that all pupils make the progress they are capable of making.
- Pupils' understanding of the rich vocabulary they are exposed to through their learning is not being developed as well as it might be. As a result, sometimes pupils do not routinely spell key vocabulary correctly or fully understand its meaning. Leaders should make sure that the vocabulary pupils encounter is explored in the depth required to improve pupils' understanding and use of it.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average despite the determined work of school leaders and staff. Consequently, some pupils are not at school often enough to benefit fully from the curriculum it offers. Leaders should continue to work with pupils and families to stress the importance of good attendance and improve it further.
- The governing body is currently undergoing significant change. Consequently, it is not as effective as it could be in holding leaders to account. The school should continue to recruit to the governing body in order to enhance the knowledge and skills required to improve its effectiveness.

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 the school could now be better than good/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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Thrunscoe Primary School, to be good on 24–25 January 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	138468
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10121855
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	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rolf Sperr
Headteacher	Jill Goodwin
Website	www.thrunscoeacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is larger than an average-sized primary school. It also runs a breakfast club for pupils.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and other members of staff. I also met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. I took account of the 23 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes. I gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussion. I also took into account the 27 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

- I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents. I also evaluated information relating to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.
- I took account of the views of 27 parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, along with three responses submitted as free-text.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. In doing so, I visited classes across year groups and reviewed pupils’ work. I spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read. I also met with teachers.

Inspection team

Barry Found, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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