

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



19 July 2021

Sian Carr  
Headteacher  
Townhill Junior School  
Benhams Road  
Townhill Park  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO18 2NX

Dear Mrs Carr

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Townhill Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 29 June 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

**Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.**

The school should take further action to:

- ensure all staff are trained and use expert knowledge to teach early reading
- redouble its efforts so that all subject plans identify and sequence the knowledge it wants pupils to learn and remember, and ensure that staff know how to deliver this effectively
- make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to achieve well in subjects other than mathematics and English.

### **Context**

Since the last full inspection in June 2019, the school left the Riverside Trust and became a foundation school. When it joined the Reach Cooperative Trust in September 2020, a new governing body was formed.

A new mathematics leader was appointed internally in March 2021, when the previous postholder left the school.

### **Main findings**

You have worked with determination to improve the school. Plans were interrupted by the pandemic and developments slowed. Leaders and governors have accelerated the pace of change since March 2021. You and your team check the impact of your work, so you know these improvements are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. These checks help you to accurately review progress towards the school becoming good.

Writing is improving. Staff use planning which develops pupils' knowledge of writing for different purposes and audiences. Teachers check pupils' understanding at the start of units and then adapt plans. Pupils are beginning to use their writing skills in other subjects.

You and your team have prioritised improving pupils' reading. You have reorganised books so that pupils read texts that match the sounds they are learning. Weaker readers read to an adult every day. Some staff use expert knowledge from the training they have received to support these pupils in their reading. This is not yet consistent, so not all pupils are supported well enough.

There have been some recent improvements in mathematics teaching. The subject leader is leading a newly formed mathematics team to develop a coherent progression in plans. Teachers are using these plans so that pupils build on prior learning and develop reasoning skills to explain their thinking. Teachers use extra sessions to support struggling pupils, helping them to learn new vocabulary or to

build confidence and accuracy. Some staff accurately check what pupils understand before moving their learning on. This is not yet consistent in all classes.

Work to improve the curriculum in subjects other than mathematics and English has moved forward. Plans are helping staff to teach new sequences of lessons. Leaders have begun to check what difference these new plans are making. Not all plans identify the precisely ordered knowledge leaders want pupils to learn. Staff have not yet considered how to best support pupils with SEND in the foundation subjects.

Since the previous inspection, you and your team have worked to improve pupils' behaviour and concentration in lessons. Staff have been trained so that they are confident in managing behaviour. Pupils now believe that teachers manage behaviour firmly. Additional support is in place to help individual pupils with more challenging behaviour. Close monitoring of pupils has resulted in improved behaviour overall and reduced exclusions.

Attendance is improving for all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders have built on relationships that were strengthened during the pandemic to work with families. This is ensuring that more pupils attend school regularly.

The governing body has increased its challenge to leaders. It receives reports from leaders and holds them to account in taking action to address areas of weakness. Governors also visit the school to check that what leaders tell them is accurate, such as how effectively pupils are taught to keep themselves safe.

### **Additional support**

You have welcomed and made effective use of incisive reports from the local authority. This has supported you in shaping subject plans and developing subject leaders' monitoring skills. It has also guided the content of improvement plans, so that you are clear about what you are trying to achieve and able to measure your progress towards becoming a good school.

Support from subject leaders in education has helped develop subject planning.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, other senior leaders, pupils, staff, representatives of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I visited lessons, listened to pupils read, examined the school's improvement plan and internal and external monitoring reports. I looked at 50 responses, including nine free-text comments, to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View. I also looked at 26 staff survey responses.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the Reach Cooperative Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Southampton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Anderson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**