

Inspection of Templewood Primary School

Pentley Park, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 7SD

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that they enjoy school, feel safe and are happy. Pupils behave well in lessons and play happily together at breaktimes. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that they know several adults that they can talk to. They are confident that teachers will sort out any concerns they may have.

Values such as respect and kindness are at the heart of the school's work. Pupils learn about different faiths and religions. They recognise and respect differences. They talk about the value of learning from different cultures.

Pupils particularly enjoy the creative activities the school provides. Pupils say they enjoy art and music. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the creative and theatre clubs they attend after school. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. Year 6 digital ambassadors support younger pupils in computing lessons. They take this role very seriously and carry out their duties with pride.

The majority of parents say that their children are happy and safe. They are pleased with what the school provides for their children. However, the curriculum is not planned well enough in all subjects. Pupils do not gain the essential knowledge and skills that they need to achieve as well as they should across all areas of the curriculum.

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

The school has experienced some significant changes in leadership and staffing over the last five years. Until recently, the school had been without a full-time headteacher for several years. This has hindered governors from providing a suitable level of challenge to school leaders. The new headteacher has a clear vision and has accurately identified what leaders need to do to improve pupils' learning across the curriculum.

In some subjects, such as mathematics and computing, curriculum plans are well structured. Teachers check what pupils already know. This helps pupils to build successfully on their mathematical understanding and computing knowledge. Pupils learn skills to be able to approach increasingly complex tasks in problem-solving and programming.

In other subjects, teachers do not always check pupils' understanding well enough. Some pupils are unable to remember what they have been taught in any detail. This is because curriculum plans in these subjects do not specify the important content leaders want pupils to learn. Teaching does not help pupils build on prior learning to gain depth of knowledge over time.

Children in the nursery get a good start to their education. They settle quickly because leaders identify and support children's individual needs early. Children listen to stories daily and have access to a wide range of books. They experience rich

language modelled by adults. However, the teaching of reading and development of language is not securely built on as pupils move through the school. In Reception and key stage 1, lessons in early reading do not always help pupils to build on the vocabulary and sounds that they already know. This means that some pupils develop gaps in their phonics and struggle to read fluently. Adults do not always make sure pupils read books that are matched to the sounds that they know. So, pupils struggle to read as well as they should. Some pupils who develop gaps in their phonics knowledge do not always receive the right support to catch up quickly.

All staff are committed to supporting pupils' well-being and personal development. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive targeted support to meet their individual needs. Pupils with SEND speak positively about the support they receive from adults to ensure they are included in school life at all times. Staff make sure that the most vulnerable pupils have their social and emotional needs met.

The school's personal, social, health and economic curriculum helps pupils to learn about different relationships, cultures, and religions. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others. Values such as empathy and acceptance are well embedded and understood by pupils and staff.

Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of leaders and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders follow up concerns about pupils swiftly. Staff know who to speak to if they have concerns about pupils' safety and they know how to record information accurately on the school's system. Leaders work with external agencies to support the most vulnerable pupils and families, so they get the precise help that they need.

Staff carry out all necessary safeguarding checks on all adults who visit and work at the school. Leaders know about the latest safeguarding updates.

Teachers make sure that pupils are taught age-appropriate content about how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Until now, leaders, including governors, have not accurately identified the weaknesses in the quality of education. They have not formally set out a clear and strategic plan for improvement. This has meant that staff are unsure of the school's priorities to raise standards, the resources needed and what leaders want to achieve. Leaders need to ensure that the weaknesses they have now identified

are reflected within their school development plans with appropriate actions to address each one.

- Curriculum plans for some subjects are not clear enough or well structured. They do not specify the important knowledge pupils should learn. This means that pupils do not make progress in the curriculum of which they are capable and have gaps in their understanding and knowledge. Leaders need to ensure the school's curriculum is planned and sequenced in all subjects so that teaching staff know what leaders want pupils to learn so that new knowledge and skills build on pupils' prior learning.
- The reading curriculum does not help teachers structure lessons in phonics and reading across year groups. Teachers do not always help pupils to build on the vocabulary they know so that they learn to read with increasing fluency quickly. Leaders need to ensure that the reading curriculum specifies precisely the skills that they want pupils to learn and the language they want pupils to know.
- The teaching of reading is not sequenced well enough from Reception to Year 1. In some cases, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have developed gaps in their phonics knowledge. Leaders should ensure that pupils continue to build on their reading skills from nursery through to Year 6 so that gaps are identified sooner and pupils who fall behind catch up quickly.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	117174
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10199316
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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nick Kingsley-Johnson
Headteacher	Katherine Martindill
Website	http://www.templewood.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2006, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection there have been several interim headteachers. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2021.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key stage leaders. They also held meetings with the special educational needs coordinator and all class teachers.

- The lead inspector held a meeting with five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The clerk for the governing body was also present. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of information, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records of pupils' behaviour, and curriculum plans. School policies, documents and records relating to safeguarding, including the single central record, and governors' minutes were scrutinised.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors also reviewed records of behaviour and attendance and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors took account of 26 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 73 free-text responses to the parent survey, 116 responses to Ofsted Parent View and 70 responses to the pupil survey. An inspector spoke with several parents on day one. Inspectors also considered several items of correspondence from families.
- The subjects covered in depth as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics, computing, and geography. In each subject, inspectors spoke with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kristian Hewitt

Her Majesty's Inspector

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