

Inspection of an outstanding school: Towers Infant School

Osborne Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1HP

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 November 2021

Outcome

Towers Infant School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and welcoming school where pupils are happy. They get off to an excellent start in their education. This is because leaders have high expectations. The curriculum is ambitious and pupils are rightly proud of their achievements. Classrooms are lively places where pupils are enthusiastic and excited. They are confident and enjoy talking to each other about their learning.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent commented, 'A fantastic school, both my children are very happy, and I have nothing but praise for the wonderful staff who go above and beyond for our children.' This is a view shared by many.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The many rewards on offer motivate pupils to do their best, as for example an invitation to a 'VIP lunch' with the headteacher. Lunchtime staff also reward pupils when they show 'marvellous manners'.

Pupils know and follow the school's 'BUILD' values. These include being respectful and determined. Pupils treat each other with kindness and are polite. Pupils feel safe and trust staff to take care of them. They said that bullying does not happen. If it were to, pupils know that they can tell their teachers, who will deal with it quickly.

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

Leaders have designed and embedded a high-quality curriculum. Staff deliver it well across the school. Leaders make sure that all pupils receive the same ambitious curriculum. This includes the most disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs/and or disabilities (SEND). Staff know the needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND. They make sure that pupils get extra support to help them achieve well.

Leaders make early reading a priority. They have trained staff to deliver a well-structured phonics programme. Staff provide effective support for those who struggle with reading. As a result, these pupils catch up quickly.

In Nursery and Reception, children learn to write simple words and sentences. Staff encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. Children use their increasing knowledge of phonics to help them do so.

Teachers expose pupils to a wide range of texts. This includes poetry, fiction and non-fiction. Pupils enjoy listening to their teachers read to them. Teachers model the skills of reading, using tone, fluency and expression. This helps pupils to have confidence when they read aloud. Staff invite pupils to share their love of reading with others. They have designed quiet 'reading zones' around the school. These include a school bus stop, a coffee shop and a bathtub. Pupils enjoy these spaces and use them to read their favourite books.

Staff clearly plan and sequence learning to build on pupils' prior knowledge. They are careful to check that pupils have understood what they have been taught. This was notable in mathematics. Children in early years begin to develop a sense of curiosity when exploring mathematical concepts. Teachers plan activities to develop mathematical vocabulary, such as 'less than' or 'more than'. Staff use characters from well-known stories, songs and rhymes to engage children.

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes. They said that learning is sometimes hard, but teachers help them and make lessons fun. For example, pupils particularly enjoy mathematical investigations. They are resilient when solving problems involving multiplication and division. Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of education.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is an integral part of the curriculum. The PSHE programme meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils have weekly lessons that often link to other subjects. For example, in Black History Month, pupils learned about Mae Carol Jemison, the first black woman in space. Pupils behave very well in lessons. This helps them to learn without disruption.

Leaders provide various opportunities for pupils' wider development. They invite visitors to share their expertise and life experiences with pupils. For example, a local member of Parliament spoke to pupils about his role and what it entails. Pupils join their own 'school parliament'. This helps them to understand the concept of democracy. Pupils discuss and make decisions on how to protect the environment. For example, they keep the school pond clean so that fish and insects can thrive.

Pupils also learn about other faiths and cultures. They are taught to respect different views and the beliefs of others. This helps them to understand the world around them.

Governors are well informed about the quality of education for pupils. They hold leaders to account effectively. Teachers in the early stages of their career appreciate the support of their mentors. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Systems and procedures for safeguarding are robust. All leaders and staff receive up-to-date training. Staff understand recent changes to statutory guidance. They report concerns quickly to keep pupils safe from harm.

Leaders follow up any concerns to ensure that pupils receive the help they need. Strong partnerships with outside agencies mean that families get appropriate support and advice.

Pupils are taught how to recognise risks. For example, they learn how to stay safe online.

Governors regularly review the register of pre-employment checks.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2016.

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	102309
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10206474
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Adele D'Silva
Headteacher	Matthew Dineen (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.towersinfant.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Nursery provision was introduced in September 2017.
- Towers Infants and Junior schools operate as one school, sharing the same leadership team and governing body. This inspection did not involve the junior school.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision for their pupils.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and has taken that into account in her evaluation.

- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, teachers, support staff, home school support worker, representatives from the local authority and three members of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum

plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to support staff, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work.

- The inspector reviewed safeguarding arrangements, talking to leaders, staff and pupils and checking safeguarding records.
- The inspector took account of the 41 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including 23 free-text comments. The inspector also considered the views of 24 members of staff who responded to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Dawn Titus, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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