

# Inspection of an outstanding school: The Tydd St Mary Church of England Primary School

Churchway, Tydd St Mary, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 5QY

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Inspection date:

5 May 2022

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Tydd St Mary Primary School is a happy place. There is a family feel about the school. Pupils told inspectors, 'We have a great headteacher, staff make the learning fun and the children are really friendly.' Pupils are proud of their school. They say that they feel safe.

Leaders promote pupils' academic, personal and spiritual development. Staff have very high expectations of pupils. The school's values permeate its work. Pupils understand the values. They are highly motivated to achieve. Pupils are polite and respectful. They behave very well. Pupils work hard and care for each other. Pupils know that bullying is not tolerated. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils have a clear understanding of equality.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent, typical of many, said: 'I feel very lucky that our children attend this school. They have received the best start to their education, with great teachers and fantastic opportunities.' Parents appreciate the way that the staff go above and beyond for their children.

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

Leaders have designed the mathematics curriculum well. Pupils build their understanding and skills progressively. They like mathematics. Pupils understand, and use, a wide range of mathematical vocabulary. For example, pupils use 'cylinder', 'cube', and 'triangular prism' when discussing three-dimensional shapes. Other pupils use the term 'obtuse' when describing angles. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to see mathematics as meaningful. They frequently check pupils' learning. Teachers provide

regular opportunities for pupils to recap their mathematical knowledge. Staff are quick to provide support if pupils get stuck.

There is a strong culture of reading at the school. Leaders ensure that there is a sharp focus on reading. Books are valued. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. They have ensured that there is a rigorous and sequential approach to the reading curriculum. However, phonics is not consistently taught well enough. Reading books do not always connect closely to the phonic knowledge pupils are taught when they are learning to read. As a result, some of the weakest readers struggle to develop fluency when learning to read. This is a significant barrier to these pupils. Some pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words as they have too many gaps in their phonic knowledge. However, staff do support those who struggle to read to help them catch up.

Leaders have developed a strong curriculum in most subjects. The curriculum has been organised to ensure that pupils build their knowledge and skills gradually. Leaders ensure that pupils remember their learning. For example, pupils can explain that focusing on hand-eye coordination helps them when playing tennis. Other pupils know that the same skill can be applied to other sports, such as cricket and rounders. However, some curriculum thinking is not as ambitious. In design and technology, leaders have not identified precisely the key knowledge that pupils need to learn from Reception to the end of key stage 2.

The learning environment in the early years is very engaging. Children enjoy their learning. They have positive attitudes towards staff and towards each other. Teachers ensure that there is a sharp focus on communication and language. They provide tasks related to the children's learning. For example, children create pictures using the regular shapes they have learned about in mathematics.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum. Pupils access the curriculum well. Leaders work very well with external agencies. They communicate well with parents. Teachers provide strong support and ensure that resources are suited to pupils' needs. They regularly check how successfully pupils with SEND access the curriculum.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to be responsible. Most pupils understand the British values, including democracy. Pupils enjoy their roles as school councillors, house captains and mini police. They know that staff value their views. Pupils know how to eat healthily and keep fit. A high proportion of pupils attend extra-curricular clubs. Staff create a respectful culture. There is some inconsistency in some key stage 2 pupils' knowledge of different faiths and beliefs.

Governors and representatives of the local authority know the school well. They understand the school's strengths and know what needs to improve. Leaders engage well with staff. They consider staff's workload. Staff are very positive about the school's leaders and the professional support they have received from the local authority.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that the curriculum may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of care at the school. Leaders provide support to vulnerable pupils. Staff pass on concerns promptly. Record-keeping is detailed. Leaders ensure that they provide regular safeguarding training for staff and governors. They check that staff know how to spot pupils who may be at risk. Governors regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe, including when working online. Pupils say that they know whom to go to if they have a concern. They know that staff will take their concerns seriously.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff are inconsistent in their implementation of the school's phonics programme. They have not been trained well enough to deliver the school's phonics programme consistently. Some pupils who struggle to read have reading books that are too challenging. As a result, some pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words and find it difficult to access the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the school's phonics programme well, including by ensuring that reading books match the sounds that pupils already know.
- The key knowledge and content that pupils need to learn in design and technology are not sufficiently well considered and sequenced, unlike in other areas of the curriculum. In this subject, it is not yet fully clear what pupils should learn, and by when, to build their knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that curriculum thinking for all subjects sets out precisely the knowledge that all pupils, including those with SEND, in all year groups, should know and by when.

## 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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in May 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120614
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10229066
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	100
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Clive Browne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sonya Ely
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.tydd-st-mary.lincs.sch.uk">www.tydd-st-mary.lincs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The last section 48 inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools took place in March 2016.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND and a sample of teaching and support staff.
- One inspector met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. They also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alison Talbot

Ofsted Inspector

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