

# Inspection of Tennyson Road Infant School

Highfield Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire NN10 9QD

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Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy learning with their friends at Tennyson Infant School. Typically, one pupil told inspectors, 'There are lots of helpful people here.' Pupils know that there is always a member of staff they can speak to if they are worried. They told inspectors that they feel safe.

The school's leaders have improved the school since the previous inspection. However, they know that there is much more to do. On occasions, teachers do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how successfully the curriculum supports pupils to know and remember more. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders create a calm and orderly environment in the school. Pupils are polite and respectful. Pupils know that bullying is not tolerated. They generally behave well. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is good most of the time and that staff deal quickly with any incidents of bullying. Pupils have a clear understanding of difference and equality.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school. However, a significant minority of parents say that they would like more information from the school, including about their child's progress.

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

The quality of education is not good in all subjects. In many subjects, the curriculum is at an early stage of development. It is not always clear what pupils should be learning and when. In phonics and mathematics, improvements are already underway. Leaders have identified the key knowledge they expect pupils to learn. In other subjects, leaders have ensured that what they intend pupils to learn covers the requirements of the national curriculum. However, they have not identified precisely enough the key knowledge and skills pupils should gain as they move through the school. Leaders do not check regularly enough how successfully pupils access the curriculum. This means that teachers do not know whether pupils remember the most important knowledge so that they build their understanding over time.

Reading is a priority. Staff encourage pupils to develop a love of books and reading. The school library is a central part of the school. The approach that is used to teach phonics is relatively new. For some pupils, the books they are given to read do not match the sounds they have learned. Some pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words as their books are too hard. Some of the pupils who struggle to read do not always receive the support they need to help them catch up. There has not been sufficient training to ensure consistency in how all staff teach phonics. While phonics is generally taught well, some staff do not pronounce sounds correctly.

Pupils say that they enjoy mathematics. Leaders have designed the curriculum in mathematics carefully. Some pupils explain their learning well using mathematical vocabulary. For example, pupils use 'longer' and 'shorter' when measuring. Pupils' workbooks provide regular opportunities for them to revisit their learning in 'reflect' tasks. However, not all teachers ensure that these tasks are completed. There is some inconsistency across classes in how teachers implement the curriculum in mathematics.

Access to the curriculum is variable for some pupils with SEND. Some of these pupils achieve well. However, leaders do not ensure that all pupils with SEND are supported well enough. On occasions, some of these pupils' needs are identified but they are not supported sufficiently well to access the curriculum. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not make the progress that they should.

Leaders have started to set out how learning in the early years connects with the learning that pupils will encounter as they move through the school. Where this knowledge is clearly identified, children remember their learning. However, leaders have not identified the knowledge that children should learn in all areas of learning. As a result, some children do not remember what they have been taught across the curriculum in the early years. Relationships are very positive between children and adults in the early years. Staff ask questions which develop children's vocabulary.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development. Pupils understand right from wrong. They know how to stay mentally and physically healthy. However, some pupils' knowledge of different faiths and beliefs is weak. While most pupils understand British values, including democracy, some pupils are unsure.

Governors and representatives of the local authority know the school well. They understand the school's strengths and have acted quickly to bring about recent improvements. Governors understand their statutory responsibilities. A significant minority of staff say that they would like more opportunities for consultation with leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff know how to spot pupils who may be at risk of harm. They pass on concerns promptly. Leaders support pupils' welfare. Leaders provide regular training for staff and governors. Governors regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures. Leaders work well with external agencies to provide additional help when needed.

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

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

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

- Leaders are part way through developing a sequenced curriculum. In some subjects, and curriculum areas, leaders are yet to identify the key knowledge that they wish pupils to learn. As a result, on occasions, there are inconsistencies in what pupils can recall about their learning. Leaders should ensure that curriculum thinking for all subjects sets out the knowledge that all pupils, including those with SEND, from the early years to the end of key stage 1, should know and by when.
- Staff regularly check some of what pupils know in the core subjects. However, leaders have not developed assessment strategies for the foundation subjects. Teachers do not regularly check how successfully pupils learn the curriculum in the foundation subjects. Leaders need to develop a consistent approach to assessment in the wider curriculum subjects, ensuring that the use of assessment does not place unnecessary burdens on staff or pupils.
- 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 hard. Some do not receive sufficient support to enable them to become confident readers. 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, and by providing pupils who struggle to read with the support they need to enable them to read with confidence.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum well enough. Leaders have not established rigorous systems to meet these pupils' individual needs. Pupils with SEND do not always benefit from a good-quality education. Leaders should make sure that all pupils with SEND receive the support they need to enable them to access the full curriculum and achieve as highly as they should.
- Some pupils' knowledge of British values and different faiths is inconsistent. Although they know to respect difference, some pupils are not as aware as they should be of what these differences may be. Leaders should ensure that pupils have the necessary knowledge and understanding of British values and different faiths.

## 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>	121862
<b>Local authority</b>	North Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241075
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Michael Kendall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Hall
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://tennysonroadinfants.org.uk/">https://tennysonroadinfants.org.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- 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.
- An inspector met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. 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.
- The 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

Luella Manssen

Ofsted Inspector

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