

Inspection of Tower Hill Community Primary School

Moor Avenue, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 6NB

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

'Marvellous mistakes' are celebrated here. Everyone sees these as opportunities to learn. Pupils live out the school vision of 'growing together'. There is a real sense of family throughout the school. Staff care deeply about the pupils. Because of this, pupils feel safe and thrive in the nurturing environment. One parent, with a comment that was typical of many, said, 'This school really cares.'

Staff set high expectations for the pupils, and they rise to them. Pupils share the responsibility for setting high standards. For example, Year 6 'active play leaders' organise activities for younger pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils work diligently and do not disturb each other. They talk enthusiastically about their work with each other.

Bullying is very rare at this school. A very small number of pupils told inspectors that they may not report bullying for fear of being further teased about it. Leaders at the school are aware of this and are addressing it by making it clearer to pupils how they will be supported if they report bullying.

Pupils love reading. A decommissioned double decker bus has been converted into the school library. Pupils sprint to the bus at social times to find books to read. Older pupils act as librarians and help younger pupils choose books that they will enjoy.

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

From the minute children join the school, they learn to read using a well-structured phonics programme. Leaders have ensured that staff who deliver specialist phonics teaching are well trained. There is a focus throughout the school to help pupils learn to read confidently and fluently.

Leaders have designed activities in the early years (Nursery and Reception) to prepare children for the next stage of their education. Children are engaged in activities that help them develop social skills and learn how to cooperate and share. Children learn that 'You do not have to be friends, but you do have to be friendly'.

Leaders are ambitious in their curriculum thinking. Thoughtful curriculum design is an emerging strength of the school. Recent developments in a wide range of subjects are being used thoughtfully by leaders to further increase learning opportunities. Leaders are revising the order in which teachers deliver content to help pupils learn more effectively. For example, in history the sequence of teaching the chronology of historical events has been reordered to make clearer links to other subjects. Teachers select activities that help pupils remember information and build on what they know. For example, in mathematics in the early years, children use lots of equipment to help them understand and learn complex numbers and counting techniques for their age. Teachers have strong subject knowledge in most subjects. They use this to support and challenge pupils, and as a result, pupils know

more and understand more. Where subject knowledge is less strong, specialist teachers deliver parts of the curriculum, for example in physical education.

Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) face no barriers to success here. Everyone strives for them to achieve the best possible outcomes. Staff receive appropriate training to support pupils with SEND in lessons. Extra support is available for those pupils who need it.

Leaders strive to ensure that attendance at school is a high priority. They have introduced many new strategies to encourage this. For example, pupils love receiving bronze, silver and gold attendance certificates. Pupils are very keen to welcome new people to the school. The wider personal development of pupils is a developing strength. Pupils experience a wide range of cultural activities to widen their view of the world. Pupils say visits to the local church are memorable. Trips and visits, postponed by the COVID-19 pandemic, are restarting. All pupils get the opportunity to attend a residential with the school. The camping trip in Year 2 is a highlight for many.

There are a wide range of sports clubs for pupils to take part in. Lots of pupils represent the school in a team. The clubs are popular. However, pupils told inspectors they would like other types of activities as well, such as science club or arts and crafts. Pupils are active at breaktimes. Many use the school trim trail or the playing field. The outdoor area in early years is well designed, and staff use it well to encourage children to develop vital skills such as balance and coordination.

Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They regularly learn about democracy and learn about voting in many different activities, for example voting for members of the 'eco-council' and 'agents for change'. Pupils learn about diversity and tolerance. They respect each other's views.

Staff told inspectors that leaders consider their well-being and workload when they plan activities such as assessment week. Staff willingly support each other and value the support from the multi-academy trust and local partnership schools. Senior leaders are focused on further developing and strengthening the school. Staff feel proud to work here. Governance is a growing strength, with recent appointments designed to improve the support and challenge governors provide to leaders. Governors share leaders' high aspirations and desire to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders, including governors, are meticulous in the way that they ensure that children are kept safe. All staff know how to spot and report concerns. Leaders act swiftly to ensure that the concerns are followed up appropriately.

There are many aspects to the curriculum that help teach pupils how to keep themselves safe. Assemblies, the personal, social and health education curriculum and internet safety lessons all contribute to pupils learning and knowing about how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not yet finalised their curriculum thinking across all subjects, for example in history and religious education. This means they have not yet finalised the order and content of the specific detail of what they want pupils to know and be able to do in each subject. Leaders need to ensure their recent curriculum developments are finalised and are effectively disseminated to teaching staff in a timely manner.
- The implementation of the intended curriculum across all subjects is not always consistently or closely matched to leader's high expectations due to variability of approach by some staff. Pupils are not always given suitably demanding work, particularly where less experienced staff are leading learning. Leaders need to ensure that the implementation of the curriculum is consistent across all activities by providing support and professional development for less experienced staff.

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	142449
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10227464
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kirsten Robinson
Headteacher	Paul Thomas
Website	www.tower-hill.oxon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the River Learning Trust.
- The school does not currently use 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.

- Inspectors also visited other lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, and pupils. Inspectors also spoke to parents during the course of the inspection.
- The lead inspector also met with members of the board of trustees and the local governing body.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered 16 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 10 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 17 responses to the staff survey and 32 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Scott Reece

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022