

Inspection of Thorpe Primary School

Atherstone Avenue, Netherton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE3 9UG

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 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 Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Thorpe Primary School feel well cared for and safe. This is because they know how to get help if they have a worry or concern. Through regular assemblies, pupils are reminded that staff are 'here to help'. As a result, pupils say that adults are there to help make sure that issues such as bullying get sorted out.

All pupils who are new to the school are made to feel very welcome. Some pupils take on the role of a 'Thorpe friend', helping new starters to get to know the school and to settle in. Pupils can also be 'peer mediators' who are there to help to build friendships during playtimes. These roles of responsibility are valued and show pupils that they can make a difference in their school.

There is a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere around the school. This is because pupils know what is expected of them and they demonstrate this through their polite, respectful behaviour.

Pupils are supported to become more confident learners. Their ability to talk and contribute to discussion is enhanced by skills they learn in reading lessons. This also builds their vocabulary, which helps in all aspects of their ambitious learning.

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

Leaders are determined to ensure that all pupils access a high-quality education. To achieve this, leaders have created a curriculum that helps pupils to build relevant knowledge and develop their personal qualities. This is shown in the way pupils use the school's rules of 'ready, respectful and safe' to guide them in their learning.

Ambition for pupils starts in the early years. As pupils move through the school, their knowledge across the curriculum grows in well-considered steps. For example, in the school's physical education curriculum, pupils develop their movement skills along with wider skills such as teamwork and perseverance. This happens in clear, progressive steps from early years through to Year 6. This helps pupils to achieve their best. However, in a small number of lessons, opportunities to revisit and practise the important knowledge from previous lessons are less well considered. This can sometimes lead to pupils struggling to recall and use their prior learning.

Leaders' actions have ensured that reading is a high priority for all pupils in the school. This starts from the early years, where children are well prepared to quickly begin to learn the sounds they need to read words accurately. Phonics is taught in a carefully planned order to help pupils develop essential early reading knowledge. Pupils are given books that precisely match their phonics stage so that they can practise and build fluency. Adults regularly read to pupils in their 'love of reading' sessions, which exposes pupils to a range of quality texts. This develops pupils' interests in a wide range of types of books.

Leaders work in effective teams to identify teachers' training needs and share good practice. Leaders' effective monitoring and support helps staff to further improve their expertise.

Staff typically use assessment to carefully check what children know and remember. When this is most effective, staff use this information well to shape new learning. It also helps staff to identify pupils who are struggling to keep up. When this happens, carefully planned interventions are used to support pupils to catch up.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are accurately identified. Leaders specify the steps staff should take to meet pupils' needs. For most pupils with SEND, this enables them to access high-quality lessons alongside their peers. However, for a small number of pupils with more complex needs, the support does not meet their needs as effectively. Leaders are aware that additional relevant training is needed. They have sought advice from external advisers to make sure this happens.

Community is valued by all at Thorpe Primary School. Parents and carers who speak English as an additional language, for example, speak positively about the steps staff take to ensure that they are included in their children's learning. Pupils show understanding, respect and acceptance of others regardless of the differences that exist. Pupils say that it is important to 'treat others how you want to be treated', which is shown in their actions and choices.

Those with responsibility for governance carry out their statutory duties effectively. They know the key priority areas that the school needs to focus on for further improvement. With the support of the trust, governors monitor the priorities that make the biggest difference to pupils in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Rigorous recruitment checks ensure that all adults within the school are safe to work with children. Regular and effective training ensures that adults know what action to take if they are concerned about a child. Leaders take prompt action if incidents are reported.

Pupils and families who need additional help are well supported by the school. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that families get the help and support they need.

The curriculum ensures that pupils learn about how to stay safe online, as well as what steps they would take if they had a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is minor variability in the way teachers help and plan for pupils to embed new knowledge. This is because in a small number of lessons, opportunities to revisit and practise the important concepts being learned are less well considered. As a result, some pupils struggle to easily recall the knowledge they have previously learned and make connections with prior learning. Leaders, including subject leaders, need to ensure that teachers provide consistently well-thought-through opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to rehearse and apply the important knowledge being taught, so that pupils build secure knowledge and remember more.
- The provision for a small number of pupils with more complex SEND needs is evolving rapidly to respond to external advice. Consequently, the plans in place do not specify all the precise detail that staff need to support these pupils to achieve their best. Leaders should embed the systems already in place to improve written plans and further develop staff expertise in meeting specific needs. This will ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, are supported to achieve their best.

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.

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

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| Unique reference number | 144981 |
| Local authority | Peterborough |
| Inspection number | 10238310 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 508 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Claire Higgins |
| Headteacher | Kate Trethewy |
| Website | www.thorpeprimary.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Thorpe Primary School converted to academy status in April 2018, becoming part of Peterborough Keys Academy Trust.
- The school runs a daily breakfast and after-school club for pupils.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with four members of the local Academy Committee, including the chair and vice-chair. Inspectors met with three trust members, including the chief

executive officer and the chair of trustees. Inspectors looked at monitoring and minutes of academy committee meetings.

- Deep dives were carried out by inspectors in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, music and physical education. They met with curriculum leaders and visited lessons. They reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also visited the breakfast club, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were looked at by inspectors. This included scrutinising the single central record and meeting with the designated safeguarding leads to review other safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors considered 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 23 free-text comments. In addition, inspectors spoke with parents at the gate. Inspectors also considered the 36 responses to Ofsted's staff survey, and 108 responses from pupils to Ofsted's survey of their views.

Inspection team

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Sharon Waldron, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Sally Garrett | Ofsted Inspector |
| Kristian Hewitt | His Majesty's Inspector |

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