

Inspection of a good school: Kingstone and Thruxton Primary School

Kingstone, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 9HJ

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Kingstone and Thruxton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. Those spoken to said they were happy. They love their learning. Physical education (PE) lessons are popular with many pupils. PE and sports are promoted well by 'pupil sports ambassadors'.

Leaders have high ambitions for all pupils to do as well as they can. They achieve this by ensuring that pupils from very different previous learning experiences can succeed in their work. The 'reading club' especially helps disadvantaged pupils learn to read.

Pupils behave well in and around school. They live up to the three school rules, 'ready, respectful, safe', in their attitudes to each other. They show respect towards others from different backgrounds. Pupils feel safe. They know there are trusted adults they can speak to if anything worries or upsets them. Bullying gets sorted quickly if it happens.

Pupils enthusiastically take part in wider extra-curricular clubs and in helping others. Some are editors and reporters on the 'Kingstone Chronicle', a half-termly magazine which records the school's news. Year 2 pupils have recently helped to collect donated toys and games in their Christmas appeal. Through the pupil parliament, representatives came up with the idea for an adventure trail next to the playground, which will be unveiled in the New Year.

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

Leaders have put together a curriculum which is ambitious in its scope and range. They have thought carefully about the order of learning for pupils.

All staff foster a love of reading from early on in Reception. Within a few weeks, children start to read with independence. In pairs, they help each other well to read the text. This helps them gain the knowledge and skills they need to be confident and fluent readers.

Pupils who find reading difficult can access books at the appropriate level of challenge for them. Teachers ensure that books are matched well to the letters and sounds pupils know. Pupils use their phonics skills to work out unfamiliar words. They can recognise 'tricky' words which cannot be sounded out. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of genres. Leaders have been successful in acquiring large stocks of books to appeal to all kind of readers.

In mathematics, teaching staff are skilled in developing pupils' mastery in the subject and are consistent in its application in lessons. The curriculum is well designed to enable frequent practice of times tables, for example, and to revisit topics either to secure greater depth or revise concepts that are not yet fully grasped. In early years, teaching staff have carefully designed activities around the theme of Christmas to help children learn the names of shapes. Technical vocabulary terms, such as 'subitising', are in evidence very early on.

Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in PE, as well as access to secondary school teaching staff and resources. The curriculum is well designed to make sure that pupils develop the knowledge and skills which they can apply in other sports, for example learning types of throwing and sending techniques in 'tchoukball'. Teachers track pupils' progress and enable them to evaluate their own performance.

Teaching staff check well what pupils have learned and what they still need to know. Where a subject or topic has not been taught for a while, teachers use 'super six questions' to remind pupils at the start of each unit. There are a few instances where there are long gaps between when topics are taught, for example in design and technology. This increases the risk of pupils forgetting some of their previous learning.

Leaders and teaching staff make suitable adaptations to engage pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They meet pupils' identified needs well through effective additional support in the classroom.

Lessons are largely free of low-level disruption. Where a very small number of pupils struggle to maintain their focus, leaders have put suitable measures in place to support them. Pupils play well together outside. They conducted themselves well lining up in the corridor. There is still a legacy from the COVID-19 pandemic of high persistent absence. The figure is falling, however, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils welcome those from different backgrounds and lifestyles. Leaders have ensured that pupils from a rural setting gain experience of diversity in history, religious education and music, for example. All pupils from Year 3 onwards take part in residential trips, with Years 5 and 6 visiting London. Pupils recently welcomed a disabled Paralympian champion to their school.

Leaders are very mindful of staff workload. This was reflected in the highly positive responses to the staff survey. Newly appointed 'subject champions' are given time to coordinate the subject(s) they are responsible for.

The members of the board of trustees know the school well. They are fully involved, engaging in a range of meetings and activities in school to inform their understanding.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are quick to identify any child who may be at risk of harm. They ensure that staff record any issue, however small. Leaders and staff are well trained to look for possible signs of concern, including child-on-child abuse. Any matters raised are promptly followed up and, where necessary, early help is secured. Leaders work well with external agencies where specialist help is required. Staff recruitment is managed safely. Leaders follow all appropriate procedures when an allegation has been received. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They all learn to swim and are alert to the dangers of social media and the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few instances, pupils experience long gaps between subjects and topics within them. This can lead to some pupils forgetting some of their previous learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is organised in such a way that pupils can build on their learning successfully over time.
- Persistent absence remains high compared with pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels, although it is falling. As a result, some pupils are missing key learning. Leaders should take further measures to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2017.

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

Unique reference number	137415
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10240775
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	James Wright
Headteacher	Elissa Vigus
Website	www.kingstone-thruxton.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new executive headteacher has been appointed.
- The senior leadership team has been restructured so that there are now two assistant headteachers, replacing the previous deputy headteacher.
- 'Subject champions' have been appointed to lead each subject.
- There have been several changes to membership of the board of trustees.
- The school has no pupils currently in alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and an assistant headteacher, and other members of staff.
- The inspector spoke to several groups of pupils.

- The inspector met five members of the board of trustees, including the chair and vice-chair.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including free-text comments, as well as the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector considered information on pupils' behaviour, attendance, personal development, safeguarding and child protection.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and PE. He also looked at work in a number of other subjects, including in the early years foundation stage. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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