

Inspection of Rawmarsh Thorogate Junior and Infant School

Thorogate, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S62 7HS

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well cared for in this school. They feel happy and safe. They form strong relationships with one another and with staff. Older pupils look after younger pupils in the breakfast club, at playtimes and at lunchtime. Pupils want to come to school and attend well.

Leaders have ensured that staff and pupils understand the behaviour rules. As a result, behaviour around the school is calm. Pupils display positive and attentive attitudes when learning. Pupils understand what bullying is. They know that their teachers will make it stop if it happens.

Leaders have high expectations for every child. They are ambitious for pupils to succeed in learning, as well as in their personal development. They make sure that pupils benefit from a good quality of education. Some children in early years learn less well than older pupils. A wide range of experiences complements the school curriculum. Pupils have many extracurricular opportunities. These include learning to play a musical instrument, sewing, meditation and many sports activities. Staff give pupils leadership roles, such as the sports councillors who plan activities for other pupils in and out of school.

Pupils' welfare is a priority. Their mental well-being and health are well supported throughout the curriculum. Leaders run 'active playgrounds', which encourage all pupils to work together in sports, board games and reading activities. This helps pupils to support each other and value differences in the school.

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

Leaders ensure that all pupils can read well. Pupils enjoy reading through daily opportunities to read and listen to stories. Staff create attractive libraries where the joy of reading is promoted and celebrated. Children start to learn to read as soon as they enter the Reception class. These routines, and the consistent approaches to teaching early reading, help pupils to learn to read well. Teachers make sure that the ambitious reading programme set out by leaders is followed through. Well-trained staff support any pupils who are finding reading more difficult. This helps these pupils to catch up in reading.

Children in early years are happy and feel safe. Children join in with rhymes, songs and actions with enthusiasm. The learning environment has some defined learning areas. However, opportunities for children to extend their knowledge during independent learning time are limited. Leaders' thinking about the early years curriculum is developing. They have not fully considered what knowledge children need to acquire when using areas set out in the classroom in their independent play.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2. It aims to give pupils the knowledge, skills, confidence and experiences to

allow them to thrive in adult life. It is well structured and sequenced so that pupils build on prior learning to deepen their knowledge.

Teachers ask helpful and relevant questions in lessons that encourage pupils to think deeply about what they have learned. For example, in mathematics, teachers ask pupils questions at the start of lessons to check what they can recall from previous learning. In some subjects, such as science, systems to check what pupils know and can remember in the long term are less developed. While teachers do check pupils' understanding in lessons, they do not use this information to adapt their teaching in some subjects. As a result, some pupils continue to have gaps in their knowledge and so are not ready to move on in their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders ensure that staff understand the needs of all pupils so that pupils can access the full curriculum. Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies and families to make sure that pupils gain the support they need. Staff communicate well with families of pupils with SEND and build strong relationships with them.

Leaders ensure that there is high-quality pastoral support to support pupils' mental health and well-being. Pupils enjoy attending a wide range of clubs that help to extend learning beyond the school day. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is considered carefully to help them learn about views and lifestyles that are different from their own. As a result, pupils talk sensitively about different faiths and about the make-up of different families.

Governors and the local authority know the school well. Although the governing body is relatively new, its members have formed a strong working relationship with school leaders. Governors offer leaders well-informed challenge and support.

Adults love working at Thorogate. They appreciate the training that leaders provide to develop their knowledge and skills. Leaders are conscious of teacher workload and consider ways to help them manage this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are vigilant. Leaders carry out the necessary checks to ensure that all staff are safe to work with children.

Leaders' regular training for staff means that staff understand their roles and consistently follow the school's procedures for referring concerns about pupils' safety. Leaders make timely referrals when they believe that a pupil might be at risk of harm. Staff seek advice from specialist agencies to ensure that families get the support that they need.

Pupils learn how to keep safe. They have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe when online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Opportunities for independent learning in the early years curriculum are not planned well enough. Children do not have opportunities to practise new learning. This limits their preparedness for the next stage of their education. Leaders should ensure that adults plan meaningful learning activities that enable pupils to learn and apply their new knowledge.
- Teachers do not check learning in some subjects as effectively as they could do. When this happens, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified. Leaders should refine their assessment procedures so that when gaps are identified, these are promptly addressed.

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	106910
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10241006
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gail Foster
Headteacher	John Barnett
Website	www.thorogateschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school provides and manages a breakfast club.

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 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, other school leaders and three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils and teachers from the lessons visited and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult. The lead inspector also looked at curriculum documentation for physical education and spoke to the subject leader.

- An inspector reviewed the single central record and the school's systems for monitoring and reporting safeguarding concerns. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the school's arrangements for safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and staff to discuss their views on the school. They also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at social times and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers about the school from responses to Ofsted Parent View and free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to the online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Rebecca Clayton, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Shan Brough Jones Ofsted Inspector

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