

Inspection of Thornton Primary School

Heys Street, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 4JP

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
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, including children in the early years, thrive at Thornton Primary School. They are confident, polite and they make a positive contribution to the calm atmosphere around the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), respond well to the high expectations that leaders have of their achievements. As a result, most pupils achieve well.

Pupils behave well and they value the relationships that they have with staff. Pupils know that bullying is not tolerated. Leaders deal effectively with any rare incidents of bullying that occur. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe at school.

Leaders ensure that pupils have access to an exceptional range of opportunities through which they develop their character and interests. These include visits to cities, coastal locations and the countryside. Pupils take immense pleasure in learning about the wider world, for example through visits to museums and places of worship.

Pupils proudly carry out their leadership roles as reading champions, members of the eco council and as prefects. They relish contributing to their community, for instance when caring for the local beaches and during visits to a local residential home.

Pupils are kind. They enjoy nominating each other for rewards when they demonstrate the school's values of love, respect and ambition.

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

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders have thought carefully about the design of the curriculum so that it helps pupils to build their knowledge securely on the strong start that they make in the early years. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Subject leaders have thought in detail about the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. Teachers use this information well to design activities that help pupils to make strong links between the broad range of subjects that they study. Pupils take pride in using the new vocabulary that they have learned. For example, children in the Reception class enjoy writing powerful sentences by using vivid language from the books that their teachers have read to them.

Most teachers use their strong subject knowledge to check what pupils have learned effectively. On occasion, some teachers fail to spot and address the misconceptions that some pupils have about their learning. Sometimes, teachers introduce new concepts before these pupils are ready.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Staff deliver the phonics programme effectively because leaders have ensured that they receive the training and support that they need. Staff diligently use the information they have about less confident readers to ensure that they are supported to catch up quickly with their phonics knowledge.

Leaders have ensured that the books that pupils read match the sounds that they have learned. This helps pupils to become confident, fluent readers. Pupils read avidly and they appreciate the wide range of books that leaders have made available to them in the school library.

Leaders quickly and accurately identify pupils' additional needs. They provide teachers with detailed information, which enables them to support pupils with SEND effectively. As a result, pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers.

Most pupils, including children in the early years, demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Low-level disruption is rare. When it does occur, teachers tackle it effectively. Leaders provide the support that pupils need to ensure that their behaviour improves quickly.

Leaders have designed a rich and exciting programme of experiences that prepares pupils exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. Through strong links with other schools, pupils develop a deep understanding of the differences that exist between people. For example, they learn to respect people from different cultures, and they understand that it is important to value people with protected characteristics. Pupils know the signs of a healthy relationship. They know how to care for their own and others' physical and mental health. Pupils are compassionate.

The raising aspirations programme ensures that older pupils understand the importance of working hard and achieving well. They enthusiastically recounted their trips to the local university and the talks that they have received from visiting speakers. These experiences help pupils to learn about the different options available to them in the future.

Governors share leaders' drive to provide the highest quality of education for all pupils. They use their extensive knowledge of the school and the community to provide effective challenge and support to leaders. Staff value the consideration that leaders have for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong safeguarding culture at the school. Staff receive the training that they need to keep pupils safe. Staff report any concerns that they may have about a pupil's well-being in a timely manner. Leaders are tenacious in securing appropriate support for pupils when necessary. This includes effective support for pupils with emotional health and well-being needs.

Leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils access the support that they need.

Leaders ensure that pupils are knowledgeable about the potential risks, hazards and dangers in their community. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including in coastal areas and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not address the misconceptions that some pupils have about their learning quickly enough. This hinders how well these pupils learn new concepts and knowledge. Leaders should ensure that teachers are well equipped to address these pupils' gaps in knowledge in a timely manner. This is so that these pupils can achieve as well as they should across the curriculum.

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	119148
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10256057
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	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lisa Turner
Headteacher	David Ashcroft
Website	www.thorntonprimary.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any 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 that 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 completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and with other senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with the school adviser and with members of the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of governors.

- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss early years, SEND, the curriculum, pupils' behaviour and rates of attendance, and the provision for pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They took account of the responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils. Inspectors checked a sample of leaders' safeguarding records and reviewed the recruitment checks made on staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life and their views of behaviour and bullying. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Elaine Mawson	His Majesty's Inspector

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