

Inspection of a good school: Thorney Island Community Primary School

Thorney Island, Emsworth, Hampshire PO10 8DJ

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Outcome

Thorney Island Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this inclusive and harmonious school. Pupils value learning and are eager to achieve well, knowing their teachers have high expectations of them. Pupils love their school and enjoy learning new things alongside their friends. They work hard and take pride in their achievements, including those beyond the school gates. They live out the school's values because they are woven into every aspect of school life. Pupils are taught the life skills they need to succeed in modern Britain. For example, they learn to be tolerant, respectful and accepting of others.

There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere across the school. Leaders set high standards for behaviour. They teach pupils to be caring, thoughtful and kind. Leaders, together with staff, deal with bullying effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe. There are warm and nurturing relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils hold staff in high esteem. Pupils know whom to approach if they are ever worried or need support.

Pupils benefit from an extensive programme to enhance learning and their personal development. For example, they are encouraged and supported to broaden their experiences by joining some of the wide range of clubs and sporting opportunities.

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

Leaders are ambitious, and focused on creating a curriculum that is broad and rich. In mathematics and reading, leaders' expectations of what pupils will learn from Reception to Year 6 are clear. Teachers are trained well in designing tasks to help pupils know and remember more over time. They also have strong knowledge of the subjects they teach. Teachers know exactly what to teach, the order in which to teach it and how best to support pupils to achieve well. However, the curriculum in a small number of other subjects is at an earlier stage of development and therefore not yet fully effective.

Reading is a priority. Highly-trained staff deliver the new phonics scheme with precision. Books match the sounds that pupils know, and pupils read regularly to adults in school.

This helps them to read accurately, with fluency and with confidence. Regular checks help teachers to know exactly which sounds pupils know and to identify any pupils who start to fall behind. These pupils are given the support they need to catch up quickly.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Leaders have developed systems to help teachers identify if a pupil may have SEND. They guide teachers on how to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders work closely with other professionals to gain the right advice for supporting pupils, for example in speech and language. All staff are supported well to adapt learning to meet pupils' needs effectively. Consequently, these pupils achieve well alongside their peers in class.

The provision for pupils' wider development is strong. Through trips, clubs and visitors, pupils develop an understanding of the wider world and of their diverse, island community. Pastoral care is strong. The school's pastoral team supports the mental well-being of pupils effectively. It also educates families about the importance of helping pupils being ready to learn. Staff with relevant experience provide therapeutic care for pupils, in well-designed areas such as 'the nest'. Pupils contribute unselfishly to their school community. For example, pupils set up a 'drop in' group for children whose parents have been deployed with the army, called the 'Thorney Troopers'.

Pupils behave well around the school. This is because leaders have put in place a clear system that is applied consistently by all staff. They have positive attitudes and choose to do the right thing. As a result, pupils concentrate on their learning and work together cooperatively. This also helps them to learn from one another.

The school is led and managed well. Staff are overwhelmingly proud of their school and feel supported by leaders effectively. There is a strong sense of a team working together with a common purpose. The well-being of staff is a priority, and leaders ensure there is well-structured training and development available.

Leaders and governors are highly ambitious for their school. Governors are fully committed to the school and work well alongside leaders. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and its leadership. Families, especially those in the armed forces, appreciate the time and care that all staff take to communicate with them and nurture their children. Parents value how much the school supports not just pupils' learning but the whole family. One parent summed up the views of many by saying, 'Instilling a love of learning is at the heart of all they do.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They ensure that all those working in the school have undergone checks on their suitability to work with children. Leaders provide regular training and updates for staff. Staff know how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They pass on and record concerns promptly and appropriately. Leaders follow up quickly on any concerns. They also engage well with external agencies when

needed. This ensures that pupils and their families receive specialist help to address any safeguarding issues. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example learning about water and road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they could. In the past, curriculum plans were not sufficiently well designed, which led to gaps in pupils' learning. Recently, leaders have introduced revised curriculums. Leaders need to ensure that their ambitious curriculum plans are effectively implemented and check that pupils know and remember more across the whole curriculum.

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 February 2018.

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	125868
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10269001
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	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Chris Hallam
Headteacher	Dean Clegg
Website	www.thorneyislandcps.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Thorney Island Community Primary School is located on a military base at Chichester Harbour. The overwhelming majority of pupils are from service families and live on the base. However, a significant minority of families come from outside the base.
- Turbulence is high. Pupils leave the school and others arrive unexpectedly because of postings or deployments, often at very short notice. A significant number of governors have left or joined the governing body for the same reasons.
- The school does not currently use any 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 both assistant headteachers.
- The inspector met with seven governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector held an online meeting with two representatives from the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. Deep dives included visiting a range of lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking with staff and pupils about how teaching in these subjects builds pupils' knowledge over time. The inspector also heard pupils read to a known adult.
- The inspector checked a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. He also reviewed the school's records for child protection and assessed the school's culture of safeguarding.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and relevant school policies.
- The inspector took account of parents' responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, along with their written comments. He also talked with parents on the morning of the second day of inspection.
- Pupils' views about their learning were gathered, along with what behaviour is like at the school and whether they felt safe.
- The inspector met with a range of staff to gather their views on how leaders support them and took account of their responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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