

Inspection of Thurlstone Primary School

Royd Moor Road, Thurlstone, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S36 9RD

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

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	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Thurlstone Primary School is a happy and successful school. Pupils are very proud to attend. In lessons, they are very engaged in learning. They show high levels of enthusiasm for the subjects they study. They persist well when learning is more challenging. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and at social times. Bullying is extremely rare. When it does happen, staff address it quickly and effectively.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Leaders are rolling out a new, redesigned curriculum across most subjects. This work builds well on the previous curriculum offer. Pupils are learning well, though some do have gaps in their knowledge. These gaps are due to weaker aspects of the previous curriculum.

Parents are extremely positive about the school. They see it as the hub of the community. Pupils contribute to the wider community. For example, some pupils delivered chocolate treats to elderly residents. They have also raised money for Ukrainian families by carrying out a bake sale. Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities. Older pupils are particularly proud to mentor children in Reception. Pupils in Year 6 were looking forward to their upcoming residential, where they will try a range of new outdoor pursuits.

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

Leaders have recently strengthened the curriculum. The improved curriculum makes it clear what pupils should learn and when. Leaders have broken this down carefully into small steps. Teachers know the most important knowledge to emphasise to pupils. They check pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions. There are early indications that the new curriculum will support pupils to secure ambitious knowledge and skills over time. However, in some subjects, the approach is very new. Sometimes, teachers do not use the most effective strategies to check that pupils remember the new curriculum well over time. Leaders are refining their approach to checking that pupils retain knowledge in the longer term. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge due to weaker aspects of the old curriculum.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn to read well. Teachers are trained in early reading instruction. They regularly check to make sure that pupils remember what they have been taught. Books are matched to the sounds that pupils know, which helps them to develop fluency in reading. Pupils who need help to keep up receive effective support.

In the early years, leaders have identified the knowledge and skills children should acquire. Activities are chosen carefully to help children extend the knowledge they gain from teacher-led sessions. Staff supervise closely, guiding and supporting

children as they learn. Children focus well, which helps them to learn quickly. Staff skilfully help children to learn ambitious new vocabulary. Leaders have created clear routines, which children follow. This helps children to feel safe and secure.

The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those with a high level of need, extremely well. Teachers receive helpful information about pupils and the strategies that help them to learn. Individual targets are clear. Pupils are closely monitored to ensure that they continue to get the right support.

Behaviour in lessons is calm. Pupils are keen to learn. They often display high levels of concentration. At social times, pupils play well together. They are friendly and respectful to one another, and to visitors. Teachers address any poor behaviour quickly and effectively. Staff record any incidents that happen. However, leaders do not report on behaviour trends in detail to governors. This means that governors do not evaluate how they could improve behaviour even further.

Pupils remember most aspects of the curriculum for their personal, social and health education (PSHE) well. They learn about treating everyone fairly, regardless of background. They develop detailed knowledge of different faiths. Leaders make sure that there is a wide range of enriching activities. There are numerous educational visits, which supports pupils' learning of the planned curriculum. Some visits help pupils to celebrate their local area. For example, pupils created artwork depicting the local farming community inspired by an artist they had studied.

Leaders are committed to continually improving the school. They are highly praised by parents and staff. Staff feel well supported and highly valued by leaders. Morale is high. Staff access regular training in, for example, curriculum design and pedagogy. They are proud to work at the school. Governors are very supportive of the school. They carry out their statutory duties effectively. They work closely with school leaders and staff. However, some systems, especially behaviour monitoring over time and making sure that pupil premium funding is having an impact, are not rigorous enough. While this does not impact on how well disadvantaged pupils learn the curriculum, it might mean that disadvantaged pupils are not getting the most out of the extra-curricular offer. Leaders have not provided sufficient information to help governors hold them to account on these aspects of the school. Governors do not seek out the information they need in order to fully hold school leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. Staff report any concerns about pupils' safety to leaders. Leaders react quickly and effectively. They work closely with external agencies, when needed. The PSHE curriculum covers a range of topics to help pupils understand how to stay safe online and in the community. For example, pupils learn about the dangers of water, busy roads and railway lines.

Leaders carry out checks to make sure that new staff are safe to work around children. Visitors to school are closely supervised.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the processes that leaders and governors use to quality assure the school are not rigorous enough. There are missed opportunities to further develop the school by, for example, ensuring disadvantaged pupils benefit strongly from extra-curricular activities. Leaders should make sure that detailed reporting allows governors to hold leaders to account.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use the most effective strategies to check that pupils remember the new curriculum well over time. Minor gaps in pupils' knowledge are not consistently identified. Leaders should continue to develop effective strategies for checking that pupils remember important knowledge over time and that any minor gaps are 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	106588
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10240544
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	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicola Shaw
Headteacher	Charlotte Gibbins
Website	www.thurlstoneprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector held regular meetings with the headteacher.
- The lead inspector met with three governors.

- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and, where appropriate, looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.
- Inspectors reviewed the parent responses received through the Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text responses. An inspector spoke to parents as they dropped their children off at the school gate.
- Inspectors also considered the responses received through Ofsted's staff survey and the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

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