

Inspection of a good school: Tower Road Academy

Ashlawn Drive, Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 9PX

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 February 2024

Outcome

Tower Road Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is James McCullough. This school is part of Keystone Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Helen Joyce, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joseph Pignatiello.

What is it like to attend this school?

Tower Road Academy is a nurturing, friendly and ambitious school. The school strives to 'bring the best out in every child as an individual, both academically and beyond the classroom'. It has high aspirations for pupils, which is reflected in its lived vision of 'learning for life'.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know that there are trusted adults they can talk to about any worries. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and know the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. They know the school's values well and model these throughout the day. Pupils are exceptionally polite, holding doors for adults and peers alike.

Behaviour across the school is exemplary. High expectations are known and understood by all. Relationships are based on respecting and appreciating differences. One pupil, reflecting the views of many, commented, 'We all respect and take care of each other.' Pupils are curious, engaged and enjoy their learning.

Personal development is central to the school's work. Opportunities for pupils' personal development go beyond the school and into the community. Pupils perform at a local care home and support community litter picking. Pupils enjoy the different clubs on offer, such as different sporting opportunities and art. The school develops pupils' talents and interests well.

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

The school has constructed a curriculum that is well sequenced and ambitious for pupils from Reception to Year 6. It breaks down learning into small steps. As a result, teachers know what is intended to be taught and when. The curriculum reflects both a local and wider context. Pupils learn about significant people from history, such as Bessie Coleman and Tutankhamun. The school ensures that the learning of vocabulary is a high priority. Pupils learn and use a range of key words and subject-specific language well. In mathematics, pupils learn key functions and concepts, such as circles and perimeter, in detail.

The school has an effective reading curriculum. This begins promptly in the early years and continues through to the end of Year 6. Staff are trained well to deliver phonics. They assess pupils' learning regularly. Pupils learn to use phonics effectively and become fluent readers. Reading books are mostly matched well to pupils' reading ability. A comprehensive reading list ensures that pupils experience and learn from books about diversity and cultural differences. Pupils enjoy the books that teachers read to them.

Teachers introduce new ideas and concepts well. They recap and connect previous learning. This helps pupils deepen their understanding. However, at times, staff do not always check what pupils know and remember.

This school is highly inclusive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Their additional needs are carefully identified. Leaders are relentless in ensuring that barriers to learning are overcome. They adopt an effective and continuous 'plan, do and review' cycle. Leaders ensure that all staff are highly trained. A range of interventions and curriculum adaptations are in place, and staff carefully monitor these learning and progress of pupils with SEND.

Children in early years have a super start to their education. The learning environments are bright and welcoming. Staff create rich learning and play activities across the indoor and outdoor areas. Pupils enjoy learning about different festivals, such as Chinese New Year. They learn about the world around them.

The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. A strong focus on fundamental British values and pupils' wider personal development supports pupils' social and moral development. Inequality and discrimination are not tolerated. Pupils are very well prepared to become confident and active citizens. They are supported to develop an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils enjoy the range of responsibilities available, such as being part the 'School Parliament' and being 'Reading Ambassadors'. A range of opportunities, such as visits to Boston Market Garden and learning about careers, helps pupils to understand how they can contribute positively to society.

Governors and trustees ensure that all leaders are supported well. Leaders share an ambitious vision: to give all pupils the very best education. Leaders quality assure the school's work carefully, and they know the school well. Staff feel very supported with their workload and well-being. They receive and value comprehensive training and support from the trust.

Parents and carers are very positive about the school. They consider it to be at the heart of the community. One parent, typical of many, commented, 'This is a school that goes above and beyond, every single day.'

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, teachers do not consistently check what pupils know and can do. As a result, they do not ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged to deepen and consolidate their learning. Pupils should be given greater opportunity to make connections in their learning before moving on. Leaders should continue to develop the school's approaches to assessment, enabling teachers to identify what has been learned and clearly identify the next steps in pupils' learning.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and

pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	136793
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10267961
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	575
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joseph Pignatiello
CEO	Helen Joyce
Headteacher	James McCullough
Website	www.towerroadacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became part of Keystone Academy Trust in September 2019.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.
- The school provides breakfast and teatime clubs, which are managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. He met with groups of pupils and staff.

- The inspector met with the CEO, two governors, and spoke to the chair of the trust on the telephone.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. He listened to pupils read.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, during playtimes and around the school site.
- The inspector visited an assembly.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day and on the telephone.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and reviewed the responses to the school staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jon Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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