

Inspection of a good school: Thomas A Becket Junior School

Glebeside Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex BN14 7PR

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a highly inclusive and nurturing school. Staff have high expectations for pupils' achievement. Consequently, pupils achieve highly. Pupils are happy and their attendance is high. As a result, they thrive. Warm relationships help pupils to feel safe and well cared for. Pupils are confident to ask adults for help when they need it. Echoing the sentiment of so many, one parent said, 'My son adores this school and is so happy to go in every day.'

The motto 'Together Achieving Better' sits at the heart of the school. 'The TAB Way' values of respect, responsibility, community spirit and embracing challenge permeate the school. Consistently high expectations and positive recognition through 'Community Stars' instil impressive manners. Pupils speak politely, hold doors open and are highly respectful. Learning behaviours, such as perseverance, independence, reflection and collaboration are promoted well. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exceptional. The sensory trail, calming spaces such as 'The Haven' and the school guinea pigs, Wendy and Wilma, all contribute highly to this.

Pupils flourish in so many ways. They relish the leadership roles they undertake and are keen advocates of the school. The extensive selection of clubs helps broaden their horizons. Pupils are prepared well for the future.

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

The school has transformed the quality of education in recent years. Pupils study a highly ambitious curriculum that has been carefully designed in every subject. Pupils' knowledge and skills deepen as they move through the school because they regularly revisit important learning. As a result, what they learn is carefully lodged in their memory so that they can use it to help them tackle more complex learning. Although pupils in Year 6 did

not achieve as highly as they could in writing in the 2023 national examinations due to curriculum improvements not being fully embedded, current pupils are achieving highly and are prepared well for the future.

Staff, including teachers who are in the early stages of their career, are supported incredibly well by highly skilled leaders. Their workload and well-being are a top priority. Staff receive regular, high-quality training and development opportunities. Consequently, they have excellent subject knowledge and teach with great skill and confidence. Regular checks on pupils' learning help teachers to know precisely how well pupils have understood content and what they need to teach next.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is impressive. Pupils' individual needs are well understood. A plethora of suitable strategies are identified and used to help meet these needs. Adults support pupils very effectively by making thoughtful tweaks which help pupils to make excellent progress through the curriculum. Consequently, every pupil is fully included in all that life at Thomas A Becket Junior School has to offer.

The buzz around reading is infectious. High-quality book corners, a wide range of books and the school library all have a positive impact on pupils' love of reading. One pupil told the lead inspector, 'I love reading books and sometimes lay down in our book corner. I really like doing this.' There are some pupils who join the school in Year 3 who struggle with phonics. The school identifies and supports these pupils very well so that they become fluent and confident readers as quickly as possible.

The way that the school helps pupils develop is exemplary. Pupils learn a great deal about the world around them. Topics such as healthy relationships, consent, equalities, diversity and different faiths are all elements of the well-designed personal, social and health education programme. Several visiting speakers and trips bring the curriculum to life and ensure that pupils experience rich opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. As a result, pupils become articulate, responsible and independent young people who are ready to take their place in society.

The school is supported effectively by highly knowledgeable and skilled governors who provide great challenge and support. The governing body works collaboratively with staff. Governors visit the school regularly to keep a close check on its work. This includes a careful look at several areas of the curriculum as well as safeguarding, workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 December 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](#)' 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	125955
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10321898
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	735
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jane Evea and James Lloyd (co-chairs)
Headteacher	Becky Linford
Website	www.thomasabecketjunior.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has taken up her post since the last inspection.
- There has been a change to one of the co-chairs of the governing body since the last inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings during the inspection. These included discussions with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and other curriculum leaders. Inspectors spoke to several staff during the inspection.

- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the co-chairs of the governing body. He also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents and staff were gathered through a range of sources, including Ofsted's surveys and discussions. Inspectors spoke to pupils during the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas: reading, mathematics, physical education and humanities. Deep dives included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also reviewed a sample of pupils' writing.

Inspection team

Shaun Jarvis, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Zoe Harris

Ofsted Inspector

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