

Inspection of Thamesview School

Thong Lane, Gravesend, Kent DA12 4LF

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

All pupils at Thamesview benefit from high quality support. The school teaches them about effective ways to look after their wellbeing and mental health. This is reinforced by dedicated welfare support staff, who are there for times when pupils need further help. As a result, pupils feel cared for, confident and known as individuals.

The school is clear about setting high expectations for pupils, in terms of achieving and behaving well. Staff are determined that special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) should not be a barrier to this. The atmosphere in lessons is calm and purposeful. As a result, pupils learn well. This provides them with the foundations for success during their time at school, and for life beyond it. Sixth-form students go on to a variety of exciting destinations.

The school sets out to help pupils develop their resilience and self-confidence. 'Flourish Fridays' give pupils access to a broad range of challenges and experiences. These include thought-provoking visits, such as going to Greenwich Observatory to kindle their interest in astronomy. This programme helps students in the sixth form to be confident about issues like personal finance, and to make connections with local employers.

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

The school has responded effectively to the low published outcome data from 2023. Leaders have made considered adjustments to the curriculum and how it is delivered. For example, in science, there is now a strong emphasis on scientific methods at every stage. The school has also substantially increased the number of pupils taking GCSE French, so that EBacc courses are at the core of pupils' learning. In almost all subjects, there is now a curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge and skill in a carefully sequenced way.

Teachers are knowledgeable about their subject areas, and they provide clear explanations for pupils. They break down important ideas and processes into manageable steps for pupils. Teachers also understand how to support pupils with SEND to learn well in the classroom. Most of the tasks set are matched well to pupils' prior learning, so they are challenged to progress. Sometimes, teachers do not address misconceptions in pupils' understanding as they are learning. When this happens, there can be gaps in the knowledge and skills that pupils develop.

Assessment informs teachers and leaders about areas of the curriculum that need revisiting. This information also helps them to identify SEND needs and gaps in pupils' literacy. As well as a school-wide emphasis on building vocabulary, there is specific support for weaker readers. Staff provide targeted sessions to build pupils' comprehension and reading fluency. This helps to ensure that literacy is not a barrier to pupils' future learning.

Pupils typically learn well across the curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, achieve in line with their peers. Leaders make sure that pupils are gaining qualifications that enable them to progress well. This includes ensuring that pupils attending alternative provision are achieving highly. As a result, standards of attainment are significantly higher than last year's published outcomes would suggest.

Improving pupils' attendance has been central to the school's work to raise standards. Leaders work strategically to address practical and emotional causes of absence. This has led to significant improvements in attendance. This same rigour is now being applied to improve punctuality. Clear behaviour systems and routines help pupils to know what is expected of them. Low level disruption is not tolerated in lessons. Sometimes, pupils can lose focus on learning, such as when tasks do not build on what they already know. This results in some learning being less effective than it could be.

The inclusive culture of the school is reflected in pupils' learning about equality and tolerance. This is celebrated through cultural days, pupil-led events and displays. Form time and assemblies provide pupils with the chance to consider ethical issues. There is a broad offer for pupils to explore their interests and talents, from blind football to film clubs. Pupils get the chance to give back to their community, such as through supporting the local care home and food bank. Careers education is structured to give all pupils clear guidance about their future options.

Leaders place the best interests of pupils at the heart of their thinking. Some of the processes for putting this into practice are still being embedded. This leads to variability in some aspects of pupils' experiences. The school goes to great lengths to engage with parents about what their children are learning and how to support them. Staff workload is a central priority as the school grows and evolves. Teachers feel supported by changes to the curriculum, as these are adding value for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, gaps in pupils' understanding are not closed swiftly and effectively, because teaching is not adapted in response to these. When this happens, pupils do not build knowledge and skill as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teaching identifies and addresses misconceptions as pupils are learning.
- Some of the systems through which leaders monitor and oversee the enactment of policy into practice are not as established as others. Where this is the case,

there are variations in how consistently leaders' vision is realised. Leaders should ensure that they strengthen the processes for monitoring and quality assurance across all aspects of the school's provision.

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	118879
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296282
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	967
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	52
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Karen Ioannou
Headteacher	George Rorke
Website	www.thamesviewsch.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 June 2018

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with physical disabilities. This currently provides for 7 pupils.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider and one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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 met with school leaders including the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspectors also met representatives from the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, mathematics, physical education, modern foreign languages and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. The inspectors also discussed the curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, governors, staff, parents and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts the pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

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