

Inspection of Tennyson Road Primary School

Tennyson Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 3RS

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of school is Carla Gotch. This school is part of Tennyson Learning Community, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Hilary Power, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Catherine Stormonth. There is also a trust director of education, Joanne Quince, who is also responsible for this school.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Tennyson Road Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Tennyson Road Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this inspirational school. They progress exceptionally well from their starting points. This includes pupils who arrive at different points in the school year or pupils who speak English as an additional language. By Year 6, most pupils perform strongly in national assessments and in other subjects. Many achieve at the highest standard. This is due to staff's unwavering determination that every pupil will succeed no matter what.

From the outset, pupils are taught how to be ready to learn. Staff use creative ways to help them settle. Older pupils act as 'monitors' to ensure their peers conform to high behaviour expectations. Pupils develop a strong sense of community through 'family dining' at lunchtimes. Relationships are deeply respectful. Pupils listen well in lessons. School is calm and orderly while still allowing pupils' personalities to shine through.

There are many wider opportunities for pupils to gain experiences that they may not otherwise get. This includes additional swimming lessons, learning to ride a bike, horse riding and boxing lessons.

Pupils enjoy being part of a diverse school. Older pupils act as 'agents for change' and stand up to discrimination. Their voice is heard in the school council, in assemblies, as 'rights respecting' ambassadors and as 'active champions'.

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

Pupils excel at this school. The ambitious curriculum is taught consistently well across all year groups at both school sites. Teachers know exactly what to teach, how to best teach it and when to teach it. The trust expertly supports staff to teach the curriculum to the expected standard. The curriculum helps pupils to deepen their understanding and broadens their horizons. Educational trips and applying learning to real-life contexts ensure knowledge is firmly secured in pupils' memory.

The high-quality work pupils complete reflects the depth of their understanding. Pupils' work is well presented, reflecting the care they take with their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are skilfully supported to demonstrate what they can remember. Pupils are articulate and explain their learning in depth. Teachers make regular checks on how securely pupils can recall knowledge. Pupils act on the specific feedback given to them. Across the school, there is a meticulous approach to detecting and filling gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Reading is central to the curriculum. From teaching the sounds letters make to developing fluency and comprehension, all pupils achieve very well. There is a constant diet of high-quality reading material. As a result, pupils know and use a range of ambitious vocabulary. Pupils, including those who are in the early stages of learning English or who have limited exposure to reading outside of school, enjoy a

range of literary styles. Younger pupils read books that help them practise the sounds they know. Anyone struggling with their reading receives effective support. Older pupils maturely critique and evaluate the diverse range of books they have read.

Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum successfully. Work is adapted well so that they develop independence and self-belief. Those with the most complex needs have provision that is meticulously tailored to their requirements. The school is innovative in ensuring early intervention is put in place. It has robust systems in place to check how well pupils with SEND are achieving their specific targets.

In Reception, children secure the knowledge they need for Year 1. They understand early mathematical concepts. Children learn to read straightaway and apply their phonics knowledge to develop early writing. They sustain concentration and take turns. Routines are followed very well, including at tidy-up time. Staff carefully choose learning opportunities that are meaningful. These link specifically to what children need to do to improve.

Pupils have an unwaveringly positive attitude to learning. They are keen to contribute to wider school life. Pupils with complex needs learn effective strategies to self-regulate independently. Pupils persevere if learning is tricky at first. Pupils are confident that bullying is very rare. Any form of discrimination is not tolerated by them or staff.

The school is aspirational for pupils' personal development. Leaders take care to think about the cultural and social experiences they want pupils to have. Pupils access individualised pastoral support that improves their emotional well-being. Pupils take an active role in school and community life. They become involved in social change through international projects to promote equality and children's rights.

Trustees and governors have successfully steered the school through its rapid growth. They have ensured that high standards have been maintained. They use their expertise to hold leaders to account and ensure effective use of resources. Staff value the investment in their development and the impact this has on their practice and well-being. The vast majority of parents are very positive about the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	147376
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10318645
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	746
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Catherine Stormonth
CEO of the trust	Hilary Power
Headteacher	Carla Gotch
Website	www.tennysonroad.school
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Tennyson Road Primary School converted to become an academy in September 2019. When its predecessor school, Tennyson Road Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of a multi-academy trust called the Tennyson Learning Community.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the head of school, the deputy and assistant heads of the school, the special educational needs coordinators, subject leaders, phase leaders and teaching staff.
- The inspectors also held meetings with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust and the trust director of education.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors spoke to leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' work and spoke with staff. The lead inspector also heard a selection of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors also looked at a range of pupils' work across the whole curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trustees and the local governing body, including the chair of trustees and the chair of governors.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's own framework for self-evaluation, the school development plan and trust committee minutes and visit notes.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses gathered through Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, which included 99 free-text comments. There were 50 responses to the staff survey. No pupils answered the pupil survey. However, the inspectors spoke with several pupils from different year groups across both sites during the inspection, along with a range of staff.

Inspection team

Sara Boyce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Fiona Webb	Ofsted Inspector
Bryony Surtees	Ofsted Inspector
Glenn Russell	Ofsted Inspector

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