

Inspection of a good school: Thorverton Church of England Primary School

School Lane, Thorverton, Exeter, Devon EX5 5NR

Inspection dates:

16 July 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?

Pupils at the school are kind and polite. The school's values of love, wisdom, hope, community and dignity are reflected in the way pupils and staff treat each other. Pupils know these values will help them as they grow. Pupils understand the importance of fairness and treating everyone equally. They explain how the school's culture extends beyond equality and focuses on equity.

Pupils value the wide range of clubs on offer at the school that include cricket, rugby, dance and gardening. Through these opportunities, pupils develop their talents and interests. Pupils also enjoy opportunities to mix with other pupils from across the federation. This helps them to form friendships outside of their immediate community.

Pupils develop their cultural and musical understanding, for example by experiencing live performances of symphony orchestras. Pupils have residential opportunities that take them to cities with more diverse cultures. They visit different places of worship to help deepen their understanding of different aspects of the curriculum.

All parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View say that their child is happy and does well at the school.

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

School leaders are ambitious for all pupils. The school took decisive action following published outcomes in 2023 that were below national averages in writing and phonics. The school effectively addressed areas for improvement that are evident in pupils' current achievement across the curriculum.

The school's curriculum is well designed. School leaders have set out the important knowledge and skills they want pupils to know and remember. Pupils build a secure knowledge of the curriculum progressively from the early years onwards.

The school has made learning to read a priority. There is a well-structured phonics curriculum. All staff have the appropriate level of subject knowledge. This means that the phonics curriculum is delivered to a high standard. Staff present sounds clearly to pupils. They check pupils' understanding systematically. Staff adapt learning to ensure the sounds pupils learn match their ability. Pupils are secure in the sounds they learn which means they learn to read confidently.

As soon as children start school, they are introduced to a rich range of story books suitable for their age. In the early years, children focus on several books each term. This helps them to become familiar with the stories and enables them to join in with the storytelling. Children then adapt this new knowledge effectively to create their own stories. Pupils read books from a wide range of authors and are adept at choosing books that reflect their interests. As a result, pupils love reading.

Pupils learn exceptionally well across all areas of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils develop rich and deep knowledge. For example, pupils explain in detail the impact and relevance of different Roman leaders. Pupils also use their understanding of chronology to successfully link different historical periods. The quality of pupils' written work and presentation reflect the high standards leaders have set out to achieve.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are focused and are keen to do their best. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils know what is expected of them. They respond positively to the high expectations of staff. As a result, the school is calm and purposeful.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is highly effective. The school identifies potential barriers to learning within the curriculum design. When necessary, adaptations to learning are made. For example, pupils make effective use of manipulatives and when needed, they receive appropriate adult support. This means the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. There is a strong focus on preparing pupils to be respectful and active citizens of the future. Pupils gain a deep understanding of British values. They explain the importance of democracy and understand that it is not a value that is acknowledged by all countries. Pupils elect their peers to the school council. The council contributes to the life of the school. It organises events to raise money for charities that pupils have chosen. Pupils are proud of the sponsored events they organise to raise money for refugee children.

Governors and leaders from the federation work well together. They provide effective support and challenge to school leaders. All staff are proud to work at the school.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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	113368
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10334665
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jackie Enright
Headteacher	Chris Holding
Website	www.exevalleyfederation.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Exe Valley Federation.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- This is a smaller than average primary school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors met with leaders from the school and the federation.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and by talking to parents before and after school. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Leanne Thirlby

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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