

# Inspection of Bythams Primary School

Creeton Road, Little Bytham, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG33 4PX

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This school has seen great change since the last inspection. Pupils are benefiting from the improvements that new leaders have brought about. However, the quality of education that pupils receive still needs further improvement.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and considerate. They show each other kindness and respect. Pupils benefit from highly effective pastoral care. They particularly value the support they receive within the 'thrive hive'. Pupils said: 'We can go to the hive to seek support. It is our time for self-regulation. We can then get on with our learning.'

Pupils said that bullying is rare. Any issues that do arise are resolved quickly and effectively. Pupils said that staff help them to 'feel safe and comforted'.

Pupils play within a beautiful outdoor space. Pupils take part in a range of outdoor activities as part of their learning in the forest. They enjoy off-site trips and events, including the whole-school visit to the pantomime in the local area. They take part in activities in the community.

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

The curriculum reflects the ambition of the national curriculum. Some subjects are well planned. In mathematics, for example, the curriculum is well structured. It is designed to ensure that pupils understand number and can solve mathematical problems. Pupils learn to use the correct mathematical vocabulary. In some foundation subjects, curriculum planning is in the initial stages. These subjects are not planned to allow pupils to build on previous learning and remember knowledge long term. This hinders some pupils' achievement, particularly the most able pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

There is a well-planned early reading curriculum in place. Staff have received effective support from the local English hub. The teaching of this curriculum is improving. Pupils begin to learn to read as soon as they enter the school. Reading books match the sounds that pupils are learning. Pupils receive support if they need it. The 'reading corridor' ensures that pupils are surrounded by books to whet their appetite. Pupils and their families value the 'book swop'. The school promotes pupils' love of reading very well.

The provision for pupils with SEND has improved. The special educational needs coordinator is knowledgeable and skilled. Pupils who have additional needs are swiftly identified. The school works with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. Committed teaching assistants adapt the provision to help pupils with SEND access the curriculum in some subjects, such as English and mathematics. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not adapted to help pupils with SEND achieve as well as they could.

The school works hard to support pupils to attend regularly. For example, it offers a daily breakfast club to help prepare pupils for their day. The school provides support to families to overcome barriers to regular attendance. However, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Although improving, pupils' attendance rightly remains a school priority.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned personal, social, health education (PSHE) curriculum. The school's values inform the schools work. Pupils are rewarded for exhibiting these values within the school and the community. They enjoy local initiatives such as improving the 'spinney'. School assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to share 'how and wow' moments. They discuss and debate in a meaningful way.

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to leadership and governance. Interim leadership arrangements have stabilised the school. Governance has improved but is not yet fully effective. The school has benefited from the support of the teaching school hubs and the local authority.

Staff show great commitment. They are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a positive culture of safety and welfare. Pupils feel safe. They have staff to turn to if they need support. External agencies support pupils who are particularly vulnerable. However, leaders do not always record all of the action that has been taken to keep pupils safe. This means that records are not always fully accurate.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- There is a strong culture of safeguarding and welfare. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. However, safeguarding records do not consistently reflect the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The school must ensure that safeguarding records reflect all the actions taken to keep pupils safe.
- The quality of curriculum planning, adaptation and implementation is inconsistent. It is stronger in some subjects than in others. This hinders some pupils' achievement, particularly the most able pupils and pupils with SEND. The school must ensure that an ambitious, well-planned and sequenced curriculum is in place across all subjects. The school must make sure that the curriculum in all subjects is adapted and implemented effectively so that all pupils, including pupils with SEND and the most able pupils, achieve as well as they should.

- Governance has improved significantly but is not yet fully effective. The school should ensure that the plans to improve governance are enacted promptly so that the governing body holds leaders to account effectively.
- Although improving, some pupils' absence is too high. Some pupils, including vulnerable pupils, are missing their education. The school should continue the work to ensure that persistent absence, particularly of vulnerable pupils, reduces further.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120506
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10324097
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	63
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Adrian Reed
<b>Interim Head of school</b>	Laura Ives
<b>Interim Executive Headteacher</b>	Ann Cook
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bythams-school.co.uk">www.bythams-school.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- Provision within the early years was reviewed as part of the inspection. However, this has not been reported on because there is a risk that it is possible to identify individual pupils because numbers are so small.

## 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.

- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the interim executive headteacher and interim head of school. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art. As part of the deep dives, inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders to review the curriculum, visited lessons and considered pupils' work. They spoke with pupils and teachers. Inspectors also reviewed curriculum planning and pupils' work in science and the humanities subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at various times in the school day, including the start and end of the day and at lunchtime and breaktime. They observed learning in the 'wood school.'
- Inspectors considered the response to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jon Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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