

Inspection of Tithe Farm Primary School

Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 5JB

Inspection dates:	10 and 11 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is welcome, whenever they join this school. The school celebrates the cultural diversity in its community. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils' developing language is not seen as a barrier by the school. The school is aspirational for all pupils, so they achieve well from their different starting points.

The school provides high-quality pastoral support for pupils' emotional well-being and resilience. This helps ease any anxieties and teaches pupils how to cope with their feelings. Pupils know teachers are always on hand to offer support for any worries or concerns.

The 'Tithe Farm Way' sets clear expectations for pupils to be respectful and ready to learn. This means that pupils behave well in lessons and learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils are polite and caring towards each other. Pupils responsibly take on their role in the 'safety squad' to help keep the environment and each other safe. They quickly check on anyone who feels upset and remind pupils of the school's rules. This contributes to pupils feeling happy and safe.

A range of different clubs widen pupils' interests, such as sculpture, origami and coding. Experiences such as theatre workshops and trips broaden pupils' horizons and enrich their learning.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious. It sets out the knowledge and vocabulary pupils should learn and when they should learn it. The school prioritises pupils' language and communication development. This helps the many pupils who join the school throughout the year, and pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well from their starting points. This is because the school quickly gets to know these pupils. Over the past few years, the school has reviewed the curriculum. This has improved the teaching of reading and has made a positive difference to pupils' achievements by the end of key stage 1. A high proportion of pupils join and leave the school after Reception. These pupils do well from their different starting points. However, this does mean that the school's published outcomes lag behind other schools with more stable cohorts.

Staff teach reading well. Children in the early stages of reading begin learning a few carefully chosen sounds which they blend to read words. Pupils who need extra help are quickly identified so that they can catch up. Pupils get lots of practice reading books matched to the sounds they know. This helps them to develop confidence and fluency. This gives pupils strong foundations in reading that help them learn across the wider curriculum.

In lessons, teachers present information clearly. Resources are carefully chosen to help pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to make connections between topics. For example, in history, pupils learn about the links between religions, rulers and everyday life. This helps make learning memorable. Pupils learn new vocabulary and use this well to talk

about their work, such as 'cross-hatching' as they develop sketching skills. The feedback pupils receive moves their learning forward. There are instances where pupils' learning is not precisely checked. This means that, at times, pupils' misunderstandings are not corrected. So, teachers' responses to pupils' starting points are not as responsive as they could be.

Teachers quickly identify pupils who need extra help. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well alongside their peers. The school successfully adapts pupils' learning, so they make progress through the curriculum and towards their individual targets.

Children in early years enjoy participating in a wide range of activities. These support learning across the curriculum. Children develop their physical skills, for example they carefully thread beads and roll play dough. Staff support children's imaginative play and help them to learn positive social skills. In some areas of the provision, the learning activities are not designed well enough to help children learn what is intended. Children do not have the knowledge they need to use the materials without guidance. This means that some children are not building knowledge as securely as they could.

Pupils' behaviour is calm and respectful. Pupils enjoy school. Most attend well. Staff rigorously check attendance rates. Personalised plans for pupils who are persistently absent help to improve their attendance.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils develop their oracy and confidence to speak in front of large audiences. They debate ideas and express their opinions in house assemblies and school council meetings. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. Cultural days help pupils to respectfully celebrate commonalities and differences. Pupils raise funds for new equipment and learn to oversee a budget. This develops their economic understanding. Pupils enjoy sports clubs and athletic competitions, which help them to develop new talents and sportsmanship.

Leaders are highly reflective of the quality of education the school provides. Governors know the school community well. Their support and challenge drives improvement in the best interests of all pupils. Parents and carers are well informed about their child's learning. The support and time staff receive to manage their teaching preparation helps ease their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some instances, pupils' learning is not systematically checked. This means that some pupils develop misconceptions that are not addressed, and learning moves on before they are ready. The school should ensure that pupils' understanding of the intended learning is routinely checked so that teaching can be adapted to secure pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- In the early years, there are times when learning activities are not designed well enough for children to achieve the intended learning. This means some children do not build knowledge as securely as they could. The school should ensure that learning experiences are not too complex and appropriately meet the needs of the children so that they can practise new learning and integrate new knowledge into larger concepts.

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	109585
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10345095
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Brian Mew
Headteacher	Rachel Worsfold
Website	www.tithefarmprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been some changes to leadership since the previous inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children as part of the Nursery class.
- The school runs before- and after-school provision, 'The Big Fun Club'.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 spoke to the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, teachers, pupils, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing board, including the chair and the vice-chair.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives from the local authority and the virtual school.
- 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.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, they spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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