

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Thorpepark Academy

Laxthorpe, Orchard Park Estate, Hull, East Yorkshire HU6 9EG

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 June 2025

## Outcome

Thorpepark Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive principal of this school is Caroline Knight. This school is part of Venn Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dr Simon Witham, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Terry Johnson.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils respond to these expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They enjoy their learning in different subjects.

Pupils behave calmly and with focus in lessons. From the start of early years, children learn the school's expectations for behaviour. Pupils know that there are staff to care for them and help them with any concerns that may arise. The school skilfully supports pupils who need more help with their behaviour.

The school provides pupils with an understanding of wider society and how they can contribute to it. Pupils have a clear understanding of the different groups that make up society. They develop a strong understanding of how to keep mentally and physically healthy. Staff speak to pupils with care and consideration. They create an environment of high expectations underpinned by a belief that all pupils can achieve.

During their time in school, pupils develop knowledge and skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

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

Pupils, including children in the early years, are taught a curriculum that is carefully constructed and ambitious. The school has considered the important knowledge that pupils need to develop their understanding over time. The school's curriculum helps pupils to learn about the local area. For example, pupils learn about local history and study local artists. The school prioritises supporting pupils to develop high-quality subject-specific vocabulary. At times, teaching does not support pupils to use vocabulary in an accurate way. When this happens, pupils find it difficult to articulate their learning in some parts of the curriculum.

The school's early years curriculum gives children the knowledge, skills, and experiences that they need to prepare them well for Year 1 and beyond. The needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified. They receive the support they need to be successful in their learning.

The school prioritises reading. Recent changes to the phonics curriculum and how it is taught have had a positive impact. The phonics curriculum is taught with precision by staff. Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start Reception Year. Pupils who need support with reading are quickly identified and given the help that they need to catch up with their peers. Pupils develop a love of reading through regular story times and other opportunities to enjoy books.

A culture of high attendance is developing in the school. Pupils are clear on the importance of attending school. They enjoy and value the rewards that the school has introduced to encourage high attendance. The school regularly analyses attendance data to identify where extra support is needed to overcome barriers. The school works with external agencies to provide additional support for families around attendance when it is needed. Over time, attendance is increasing and the rate of persistent absenteeism for pupils is decreasing.

The school's provision for pupils' broader development is broad and carefully considered. Pupils learn how they can keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about the importance of keeping mentally and physically healthy. They also learn about the impact of consequences of crime. Pupils develop a sense of aspiration and ambition for their own future. They enjoy meeting adults from the community, who have been successful and achieved well. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to see themselves as part of a wider society and as young people who are capable of achieving and growing as people. The school skilfully uses a range of external agencies to provide different perspectives and experiences for the pupils. This creates a vast range of experiences that benefit pupils in their broader development.

Leaders' actions and values are centred around a clear moral imperative to provide the best opportunities for the pupils and the community. Clear systems are in place to give leaders a robust understanding of the school and its strengths and areas for development. The moral purpose and drive from trust leaders is palpable. Staff comment on the importance and value of the support provided by the trust. There are clear systems of accountability, rigour, and challenge at a trust level to ensure that leaders and governors have a clear view of the performance of the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- On occasions, teaching does not enable pupils to use subject-specific vocabulary accurately. This limits pupils' ability to demonstrate and articulate their understanding. The school should further refine its agreed pedagogical approaches to teaching vocabulary and support staff to implement these consistently.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 2020.

### 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>	142307
<b>Local authority</b>	Kingston Upon Hull City Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346567
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	560
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust/</b>	Terry Johnson
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Dr Simon Witham
<b>Principal</b>	Caroline Knight
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://thorpeparkacademy.org.uk">https://thorpeparkacademy.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Venn Academy Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school has a resourced provision for 10 pupils with complex needs.

## Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive principal and other senior leaders. The inspector met with the chair of the governing body and other governors. The inspectors also met with trustees, the deputy CEO, the CEO, and other trust executive leaders.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector examined a range of school documents relating to behaviour, attendance, and governance, as well as leaders' self-evaluation of the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Liam Colclough, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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