

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Thursfield Primary School

Chapel Lane, Harriseahead, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST7 4JL

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 January 2025

Outcome

Thursfield Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Elizabeth Bradbury. This school is part of The Creative Learning Partnership 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), Sam Compton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Ford.

What is it like to attend this school?

Thursfield Primary School is a welcoming school with a family feel. Committed staff ensure that pupils receive a 'ticket to anywhere'. This motto is reflected in all the school's work. Pupils love learning and enjoy the challenge of the curriculum. Many parents and carers agree. A typical comment from parents is that 'my child loves the range of subjects and topics covered and is eager to share their learning with us at home.'

The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievement. Pupils rise to this challenge. Outcomes in national assessments are positive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the whole curriculum alongside their peers.

Pupils behave well in class and at breaktimes. Pupils are polite and are respectful of differences between themselves and others. Pupils understand and follow the behaviour systems in place. They know the 'three Rs'. They are ready, respectful and responsible. Pupils have confidence that staff will sort out any small issues which do occur.

Pupils take on many leadership roles in the school, including the school council, prefects and 'caretakers'. These roles tangibly contribute to school life. These pupils say, 'We are role models for the rest of the school.'

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

The school's curriculum is well designed. Since the previous inspection, the trust has worked closely with the school to ensure the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge in a logical order. The curriculum considers the mixed-age classes many pupils are taught in. It has a firm foundation in the early years. Staff give pupils regular opportunities to revisit and strengthen their understanding. Many pupils recall their learning very securely. One pupil commented that 'teachers find ways to make sure learning gets stuck in your head.' Pupils make links in their learning. For example, they can explain how learning about circuits in science enabled them to make a 'steady hand toy' in design and technology.

Staff have good subject knowledge. They deliver the curriculum as intended. Teachers regularly check that pupils are learning well. They ensure that any gaps in learning are addressed. Staff consider the needs of pupils with SEND when planning lessons. The needs of pupils with SEND are identified early. However, on occasion, staff do not always ensure that the adaptations made for pupils with SEND are as effective as they could be.

The school prioritises reading. Staff are well trained to deliver phonics. Books match the sounds that pupils are learning. The school provides additional phonics support for pupils who need to catch up with their peers. In Reception and key stage 1, pupils use their phonics knowledge to build their writing skills. Consequently, outcomes for pupils are particularly strong in reading. Pupils are rewarded for reading regularly at home. Reading councillors promote reading across the school. They recommend 'authors of the month'. Staff read books to children, which engage them across the curriculum.

Pupils learn how to behave well from an early age. For example, Reception staff praise children for 'wonderful walking'. Pupils enjoy the rewards they receive for positive behaviour. They know the sanctions in place if they do not behave. Well-trained staff provide extra support to pupils who struggle with their behaviour. The school ensures that pupils attend regularly. It is responsive to the needs of families of pupils who do not attend well.

The school has crafted an effective and well-considered programme for pupils' wider development. 'Champion opportunities' widen pupils' experiences and prepare them for later life. These opportunities start in Reception. Pupils know what British values are and their importance. They learn that people have different families, backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs. They are tolerant and inquisitive about these. The school considers all pupils' talents and interests through a wide range of clubs. These include cooking, coding, journalism and sporting activities. Pupils are consulted on these. They can request other clubs by asking the school council. Pupils receive their 'Thursfield ticket to anywhere' when they finish school, proving they are ready for their next stage in education.

Trustees and local governors know their roles, responsibilities and the school well. They ask challenging questions and provide effective support. They make decisions in the best interests of children. The trust provides effective support for the school in all aspects of its

work. Leaders support staff workload and well-being well. Staff say leaders are responsive to their needs. They consider 'pinch points' and provide extra time if needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the adaptations that staff make for pupils with SEND could be more effective. On occasion, some pupils with SEND do not make as much progress as they could. The school should ensure that support for pupils with SEND is as effective as possible so that they learn more.

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 to be 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 good for overall effectiveness in September 2019.

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	143547
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344115
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dr Peter Ford
CEO of the trust	Sam Compton
Headteacher	Elizabeth Bradbury
Website	www.thursfield.staffs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of The Creative Learning Partnership Trust, which consists of 10 schools.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, groups of staff and pupils.

- The inspector met with members of the trust and local governing body, including the chair of the trust and chair of the local governing body. The lead inspector held a meeting with the CEO and deputy CEO of the trust.
- 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their work.
- The inspector heard pupils in key stage two read.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the online staff survey. The inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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