

Inspection of a good school: Templefield Lower School

Malham Close, Flitwick, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK45 1AJ

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 January 2023

Outcome

Templefield Lower School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Templefield Lower School is a happy, calm and purposeful place for pupils to learn in. Pupils' relationships with each other and adults are positive. Pupils trust staff to look after them and keep them safe. Pupils know that they can share their worries and that staff will make things better.

From their earliest experience of school, pupils learn about school values. Pupils celebrate their achievements and appreciate the recognition they receive. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and contribute towards improving the school. Pupils are proud to take on these roles and carry them out proudly.

Pupils are encouraged to make the right behaviour choices. Pupils respond well to the established high expectations. In and around school, pupils treat one another with respect. They play harmoniously and look after each other. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and many pupils have never seen it. If it does happen, they are confident that staff will deal with any issues quickly and effectively.

Parents and carers, pupils and staff are positive about the school. One parent's comment, which was typical of many, was: 'My child has had a very positive experience with this school. I highly recommend it.'

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

Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum. Plans in all subjects set out exactly what pupils need to learn from the early years to Year 4. Leaders monitor teaching and learning regularly. In some subjects this is better established than in others. A few leaders do not have the knowledge and skills to check their areas of responsibility effectively.

Reading is taught well. Leaders and teachers help pupils to develop a love of reading. Book corners and the school library include recommended books to introduce pupils to

new authors. Teachers read to pupils daily. For example, a story about a baby penguin engrossed pupils in Year 1. Staff introduce pupils to a wide range of challenging texts. These are often linked to the topic they are learning about.

Leaders have put in place a well-structured phonics and reading programme. Children in the early years begin learning the sounds letters make as soon as they start school. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics to read accurately. The books they read match the sounds they are learning. Pupils who struggle to read receive extra support. This is effectively helping pupils to catch up quickly.

Leaders have planned the curriculum carefully. It is set out so that pupils build their understanding and skills securely. Teachers make sure that pupils learn new concepts in small steps. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to recap their knowledge. An example of this is in mathematics where pupils routinely practise their calculation skills and times tables. This helps them to become confident mathematicians. Teachers assess what pupils remember. Teachers adapt lessons to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils know that getting things wrong or asking for help will support their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum that is being taught to their peers. Teachers review targets for pupils with SEND to ensure that they progress as well as they should and achieve well.

Children in early years get off to a good start and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The curriculum is designed to focus on early mathematical and language skills, which children are encouraged to use and rehearse in other areas of their learning. Staff seize opportunities to inspire and enhance the children's learning experiences. For example, children in the pre-school caught hail stones on sheets of black paper and described what they saw and felt.

Leaders evaluate and extend how they cater for pupils' wider development. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to hear visitors to the school and to visit places of interest. For example, pupils in Year 4 visit different places of worship. 'Language of the Month' links to key events such as the football World Cup and Chinese New Year. These planned events contribute to pupils developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.

Governors are committed to the school and want pupils to have the experiences they deserve. Most governors are well informed and challenge leaders. However, some governors are new to their roles and do not fully know and understand the impact of leaders' actions.

Staff see themselves as being part of one team, working together for the success of everyone. They appreciate that staff well-being is a priority for leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of care at this school. Leaders make sure that all staff and governors receive regular training. They keep detailed records to make sure that all staff have the training they need. Leaders check that staff know how to spot pupils at risk. Leaders make the necessary checks on adults at the school to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when learning online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders do not have the knowledge and understanding to check how effective their curriculum design is throughout the school. This means that they do not know how well staff are delivering the subject plans or how well pupils are building their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the appropriate training and support to develop their knowledge and skills to fulfil their leadership roles effectively.
- Newer governors lack the knowledge they need to gather information and understand the impact of leaders' actions. This limits their ability to support leaders with school improvement initiatives. Governors should ensure that new governors are well trained to ensure they develop the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil their roles effectively in holding leaders fully to account.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	109527
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10255179
Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Susan Simmons
Headteacher	Debbie Trivett
Website	www.templefield-lower.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 to 25 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection.
- School leaders do not currently make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, the SEND coordinator, three governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The inspector also reviewed a range of documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a member of staff.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- To gather the views of pupils, the inspector spoke to groups of pupils, including in lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime. No pupils responded to the pupil survey.
- To gather the views of parents, the inspector spoke to some parents and reviewed the 45 responses and 39 free-text responses submitted to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- To gather the views of staff, the inspector spoke to several staff. The inspector also took account of the 20 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Simon Eardley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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