

Inspection of a good school: Tillington Manor Primary School

Young Avenue, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 1PW

Inspection dates:

11–12 December 2019

Outcome

Tillington Manor Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Tillington Manor Primary is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils from different walks of life get along well. Classrooms are places where pupils work together happily. They share ideas and listen to what others have to say. Pupils follow the three golden rules: 'be responsible, be respectful and be ready to learn'.

Staff value and care for pupils. Pupils trust the adults in school. They are confident to talk to them about any worries they might have. Staff take any concerns about bullying seriously. They deal with these thoroughly.

Pupils have the chance to take on responsibilities such as being playground buddies or members of the school council. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. For example, pupils in the choir are extremely proud to have been on the television recently.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They like learning new things. Staff plan topics that interest pupils. Currently, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are bursting with facts about the Gunpowder Plot. However, teachers do not plan some topics well enough. Too many pupils do not achieve the standards they should by the end of Year 6, particularly in reading and mathematics.

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

Children in the early years are happy and settled. Adults look after children so that they feel safe. They plan a range of interesting activities that children enjoy. Adults develop children's language and communication skills successfully. They talk to children while they play and listen carefully to their answers. There are meaningful opportunities for children to use new words, for example while pretending to be Santa's reindeers. Children's

mathematical knowledge is developing well. This is because children practise counting objects, naming shapes and telling the time. Adults make good links with parents.

Staff teach children to read as soon as they start school. From the early years onwards, the teaching of phonics is strong. In Reception and key stage 1, staff keep a close eye on how pupils are doing in their reading. They group pupils according to the sounds they know. This ensures that all pupils get the help they need. The books that pupils read match the sounds they are learning. This means that even the weaker readers can experience success.

In key stage 2, standards in reading have been too low for the past three years. Pupils now practise their reading every day. They are starting to enjoy reading because of the new reading scheme. There is a focus on broadening pupils' vocabulary. This is helping some pupils to have a better understanding of what they read. However, staff do not have high enough expectations of the most able readers.

Key stage 2 pupils do not achieve well enough in mathematics. Leaders have introduced plans that set out what pupils should learn in each year group. However, some teachers are not secure in how to break these plans down so that pupils' knowledge builds in small steps. They do not ensure that pupils understand big ideas before moving on to something new. In some classes, teachers do not expect pupils to apply their knowledge in different ways.

In other subjects, leaders' plans are at an early stage of development. Leaders have mapped out the skills they want pupils to develop. They have not planned the knowledge they want pupils to learn. As a result, pupils do not develop a secure understanding of different topics. Pupils in adjacent year groups study the same topics. Plans do not build consistently on what pupils of different ages already know and can do.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) say that they feel part of school life. Staff understand the challenges that these pupils face in their learning. They ensure that pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as other pupils. However, teachers do not take enough account of these pupils' starting points. They do not do enough to bridge the gap between pupils' existing knowledge and what they want them to know next. In some subjects, these pupils are over-reliant on adult support.

Pupils behave well. They listen to teachers and work hard. Vulnerable pupils receive a range of support to help them to grow in confidence. Pupils learn to respect the views and beliefs of others. As one pupil said, 'It is important not to treat people differently.' Pupils enjoy trips that broaden their experience of the world. For example, pupils visit the theatre each year. All pupils learn to play a musical instrument such as the violin or cello.

Leaders and governors know what needs to improve. They have put plans in place to address these things. The curriculum is moving forward, but there is more to do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide staff with regular safeguarding updates. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders act on concerns promptly. They plan support for vulnerable pupils carefully. The learning mentor works well with families and other agencies to get pupils the help they need. Pupils know that they can go to 'The Hive' if they need someone to talk to.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe online and out in the community. For example, those spoken to during the inspection explained how they learn to ride a bike safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Over the past three years, pupils at the end of Year 6 have not achieved as well as they should in reading. Leaders have introduced a new approach to the teaching of reading in key stage 2. They now need to embed this so that more pupils leave the school with strong reading and comprehension skills.
- Some teachers do not have a secure understanding of the mathematics curriculum. As a result, plans do not break learning down into small enough steps. In some classes, pupils do not embed their understanding before moving on to new learning. Pupils in key stage 2 do not achieve the standards they should. Leaders need to ensure that teachers' subject knowledge improves so that they can plan and deliver an effective mathematics curriculum. This will enable pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding confidently and fluently.
- In the wider curriculum, leaders have not identified the knowledge they want pupils to learn. Teachers are not clear about what pupils need to know and remember to support their subsequent learning. Leaders need to guide staff in knowing what to teach and in what order so that pupils' knowledge and understanding build over time. They need to ensure that where pupils in adjacent year groups study the same topics, teachers' plans take account of what older pupils already know and can do.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND and the most able pupils. They do not take enough account of pupils' starting points when planning lessons. As a result, work in some subjects is either too hard or too easy for these pupils. Leaders should develop staff's expertise in planning to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and the most able pupils so that they achieve well.
- There is variability in how well staff implement curriculum plans. Senior leaders need to make sure that subject leaders have the expertise to support staff. They need to check that staff are delivering the intended curriculum effectively in all classes and subjects.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Tillington Manor Primary School to be good on 9–10 February 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

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| Unique reference number | 124196 |
| Local authority | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number | 10111804 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 259 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Simon Rowland |
| Headteacher | Ian Goodwin |
| Website | www.tillingtonmanor.staffs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 9–10 February 2016 |

Information about this school

- The school runs a before- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and six governors. She spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked in depth at reading, mathematics and history. In each subject, inspection activities included discussions with the subject leader, visits to lessons, discussions with teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils.
- The inspector met with the early years leader and observed provision in Nursery and Reception.
- The inspector listened to two groups of pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktime. She spoke formally with groups of pupils as well as talking to pupils in breakfast club, in lessons

and around school. The inspector considered the 25 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

- The inspector met with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures. She reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and pupils who have left the school. The inspector spoke to pupils and staff about how safe pupils are at school.
- The inspector reviewed the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and information on the school's website. She took account of the 14 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- The inspector took into consideration the 33 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the 23 free-text responses. She spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Claire Jones, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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