

Thomas Hinderwell Primary Academy

URN: 140018 | Inspected: 18 November 2025

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils achieve highly in English and mathematics, particularly given their low and varied starting points and the school's high levels of disadvantage. As they move through the school, they build secure knowledge in communication and language, reading, writing and mathematics. Outcomes in national tests are consistently at least in line with, and often above, the national averages. Disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils known to children's social care typically progress well from their starting points. In several measures, disadvantaged pupils' attainment matches or exceeds that of their peers and is above the national averages, showing that gaps are closing quickly. Although work in the wider curriculum is more variable in depth and sophistication, the strength of pupils' achievements in English and mathematics means that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have a broadly accurate view of curriculum and teaching; they have rightly prioritised early reading and writing. They have adopted an agreed phonics approach and ensure it is implemented with fidelity. Staff model sounds accurately. They follow consistent routines and use assessment effectively so that pupils access and keep up with the phonics programme. In the early years, staff check children's language and fine motor development carefully and use structured activities to build secure foundations for later reading and writing. Across subjects, leaders draw on a trust curriculum that identifies key knowledge and provides a spine for progression. In writing and mathematics, teachers typically give clear explanations and modelling so that pupils know what they are expected to do. Staff know vulnerable pupils well. They use effective targeted interventions and adapted resources to remove barriers for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, in the wider curriculum, teachers do not use assessment consistently well to inform and adapt teaching. Tasks are often heavily structured, which reduces pupils' independence and flair. Teachers then develop a limited insight into what pupils have understood or where they need to go next.

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Early years

Expected standard

As soon as children arrive in the early years, staff spend quality time getting to know their individual needs. Positive partnership working with parents and carers supports this process. This ensures that children get off to the best possible start. Developing children's language skills is a priority at this school. Staff use targeted teaching activities to expose children to ambitious vocabulary, which they gradually learn and understand. This is enhanced by interactions with adults who, for the most part, model language effectively.

The curriculum in the early years supports children to be ready for their learning in Year 1. Knowledge that children need to know is clearly set out. However, the implementation of the curriculum, for example in relation to the learning environment, does not allow children to consolidate this knowledge as effectively as it could. There are some limited opportunities for children to independently practise and extend their learning further. Children in the early years demonstrate warm, friendly relationships with each other. They play well together, sharing resources and developing vocabulary happily as they play. Children start to show positive attitudes to learning.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders set high expectations for disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those known to children's social care. They know these pupils well, using careful assessment and extended settling-in periods to identify needs and agree appropriate pathways of support from the earliest stages. Termly support plans, regular discussions with staff and parents and close work with the SEND coordinator ensure that provision such as nurture groups, targeted interventions and adapted curriculum delivery are well matched to pupils' profiles. Interventions are tightly focused on pupils' identified targets and make a clear, positive and timely difference. The SEND team is appropriately qualified and draws effectively on trust expertise and external agencies to refine provision further. Carefully adapted resources are used to help pupils access classroom learning in line with their education, health and care plans. Leaders implement and monitor their pupil premium strategy carefully, using information from their evaluations to guide decisions and provide additional, bespoke support where needed. Leaders and staff demonstrate a strong, shared commitment to reducing barriers so that vulnerable pupils can participate in, and benefit from, the life and learning of the school.

Expected standard

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders and trustees make a positive difference to pupils' education and care. They have a clear, evidence-based

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understanding of the school's context, including the significant challenges it has faced in the past. Their deliberate strategic decisions have led to marked improvements in safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. Those responsible for governance know the school well and meet their statutory duties. They use information from visits, reports and external challenge to support and hold leaders to account, asking focused questions about pupils' achievement, the use of resources and the impact of trust support. Decisions are consistently framed around what is best for pupils who face the greatest barriers. Leaders' inclusive work has contributed to disadvantaged pupils achieving at least as well as their peers. Leaders provide a coherent professional learning programme, drawing on trust expertise and external partners. Staff, including newer teachers, describe targeted training, clear communication and sensible workload decisions, such as live marking and shared planning, which helps them to feel valued and well supported. Engagement with parents and carers and the wider community is now a notable strength. Leaders have built trust through positive and innovative communication, early years partnerships and well-considered work on attendance, which parents recognise in surveys and discussions. Personal development and well-being programme is coherent and adapted carefully to the school's context. Pupils talk confidently about healthy relationships, online safety and equality, and can explain why discriminatory language is wrong. They say the school welcomes everyone, regardless of background. Pupils give examples of how they show kindness and fairness in day-to-day life. Through lessons, assemblies and discussion, pupils learn about equality and begin to engage with ethical issues around respect and difference. Pastoral support is highly effective. Staff know pupils and families well. Settling-in periods help staff to understand pupils' needs and put targeted support in place quickly through nurture groups in the school's internal 'nest' provision. This benefits disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils in particular, who are helped to attend, settle and participate more fully.

Pupils are confident about asking for help and know where support is available if they feel worried or upset. Leaders track participation in clubs, visits, visitors and morning provision, and take steps to ensure that disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other vulnerable groups can attend. This means that wider experiences are an entitlement, not an add-on, and many pupils develop their confidence, social skills and interests through these opportunities. The programme successfully promotes pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles, both physical and mental, and encourages them to contribute positively to the school community. Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and world faiths, while present, is less secure in depth. They describe respect and fairness, but are less confident in explaining how British values apply in varied real-life situations or how different religions are practised.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at this school belong to a warm and inclusive community. Staff greet them by name each morning and make sure they feel noticed and welcomed. Children in the early years settle quickly because adults teach routines clearly and build trusting relationships. Across the school, pupils form positive friendships, work together happily and enjoy taking on responsibilities such as class jobs, house roles and junior leadership positions. Through trips, visitors, themed events and curriculum-linked activities, staff broaden pupils' experiences beyond the classroom and help them see a world wider than their own. Pupils talk about kindness, fairness and respect in ways that show these values are part of everyday school life. Pupils thrive because

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behaviour and safeguarding routines help them to feel safe, and as a result, they are ready to learn. Classrooms and social times are typically calm and orderly. Pupils say that bullying is uncommon and that adults deal with problems fairly and quickly should they arise. Leaders and staff keep a very close eye on attendance and punctuality, work sensitively with families and celebrate improvements, so the vast majority of pupils attend regularly. Through lessons, assemblies and discussion, pupils learn about equality, fundamental British values and different communities. They develop a clear understanding of what it means to contribute positively to their school, local area and modern Britain. Pupils achieve well, particularly so in reading, English and mathematics. Here, leaders have prioritised rapid improvements. Staff teach phonics with consistency and care, so most pupils, including those who are vulnerable, learn to read with growing confidence from low starting points. Pupils enjoy many of their lessons and talk with interest about topics such as geography and history. However, teaching in some wider curriculum subjects does not always help pupils to think deeply or to remember important knowledge.

Next steps

- Leaders should support staff to implement the curriculum in early years as intended to ensure that children have further opportunities to develop, practise and learn new knowledge.
- Leaders should ensure that staff further develop their use of assessment to design and adapt learning in the wider curriculum so that tasks deepen pupils' thinking, build securely on prior knowledge and lead to a more secure understanding over time.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders continue to improve pupils' already high attendance. Staff promote the importance of attendance effectively, using high-quality training to hold supportive conversations with families. Strategies such as clear communication about the impact of absence and a focus on small, 'little win' improvements are having a positive impact. Persistent absence is reducing. Leaders identify and tackle barriers to high attendance with care and precision. Punctuality is monitored rigorously, with notable reductions in lost learning time for key pupils. A variety of motivational attendance rewards further reinforces positive habits. Leaders track the attendance of vulnerable pupils carefully. Highly appropriate support for these pupils results in high attendance. The school has a culture that is highly conducive to learning. Pupils move calmly, safely and sensibly around the building. Classrooms are orderly, with well-established routines that pupils of all ages follow with minimal prompting. In lessons, pupils are focused and engage well. From the early years onwards, adults model positive behaviour and social skills. Children learn how to sit, listen and take turns. They build respectful relationships with staff and peers. Leaders respond swiftly and skilfully to pupils' changing needs, balancing firm expectations with tailored support. Pastoral work, including the support from 'The Nest', the school's internal nurture provision, and explicit teaching about relationships and boundaries, helps pupils to reflect on, repair and improve behaviours.

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For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/thomas-hinderwell-primary-academy-scarborough>