

# Inspection of Toot Hill School

The Banks, Bingham, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG13 8BL

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils benefit from learning a well-organised and ambitious curriculum. They appreciate the support they receive from staff. The majority of pupils achieve success. They secure appropriate education, training or employment when they leave school.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe there. They appreciate the school's 'Work Hard, Be Kind, Take Pride' culture. They focus well during lessons and produce work of a high quality. The majority of pupils are respectful towards others. They know that bullying is unacceptable. When staff know about it, they resolve issues quickly.

The school's atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Pupils know how they should behave. Most conduct themselves well. Those who struggle to do so, get close support. Some pupils say that sanctions for being late or for wearing incorrect uniform are not always reasonable or consistent.

According to pupils, 'there is something for everyone' when it comes to extra-curricular activities. Many pupils take advantage of the numerous opportunities to nurture their talents and try new experiences. They enjoy leading events such as charity fundraising activities and the 'Pride March'. Sixth-form students value being subject representatives or members of the students' union.

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

The school's curriculum offer is extensive. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a wide range of academic and vocational subjects. Sixth-form courses remain available even when only a small number of students opt to study them. More pupils each year choose to learn a modern foreign language at key stage 4. However, pupils at key stage 3 have only begun to learn computer science recently.

The curriculum in most subjects is well considered and coherent. Pupils with SEND usually study the same curriculum as their peers. Subject staff work together closely to plan what to teach and when. They organise content carefully so that it builds on what pupils know already.

In most subjects, teachers make effective use of their subject expertise. They choose appropriate activities to teach pupils new content. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to recall previous information. In mathematics, 'do-it, twist-it, solve-it and mix-it strategies' help embed pupils' learning. Teachers of history make effective use of 'learning steps' to prompt pupils to remember key information. In modern foreign languages, frequent repetition improves key stage 3 pupils' pronunciation of new vocabulary. Teachers break activities into smaller chunks to help pupils with SEND access the work. Skilled questioning by teachers secures and

deepens pupils' learning. Pupils often check their work for errors or gaps. They improve their responses using teachers' advice.

The curriculum in science is not always implemented effectively. Some teachers do not deliver scientific topics in a logical order. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve in this subject are inconsistent. Pupils' engagement with tasks varies. This affects the quality and quantity of their written work. Some pupils struggle to remember what they have learned in science. Leaders are currently implementing their plans to improve this area of the curriculum.

Pupils who need help to improve their reading are well supported. Some also benefit from reading with sixth-form students each week. A well-developed programme helps these pupils become confident and accurate readers. All pupils read suitably demanding texts in English. There are also regular opportunities for pupils to develop a love of reading across the curriculum.

Pupils and sixth-form students attend school well. Their attendance is close to the high levels achieved before the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils' behaviour has improved since the pandemic. Most pupils comply readily with what staff expect of them. However, some pupils are anxious about getting things wrong. They find the behaviour expectations too demanding. Some parents and carers agree.

The quality of the sixth-form provision is exceptional. Students are committed and aspirational. The 'dare to know' challenge encourages them to be inquisitive. They confidently discuss topics such as diversity, global issues and age-appropriate ways to stay safe. They feel well supported planning their next steps. Almost all students further their studies at university or through apprenticeships.

The personal development programme is very comprehensive. Leaders modify the programme to make sure that pupils know about new risks that may cause them potential harm. The 'PRIDE' initiative develops pupils' character (purpose, responsibility, integrity, determination and empathy). Well-being Wednesdays teach pupils how to look after their physical and mental health. A well-planned careers offer informs pupils' decisions about their futures.

Staff appreciate leaders' support to reduce their workload. They value the many opportunities to develop their professional practice.

Senior and trust leaders are ambitious for the school's pupils. The local governing body and trustees provide these leaders with rigorous challenge and support. Together, they are well placed to ensure that the school continues to improve.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Most pupils feel safe in school. They know they can use the school's online referral form if they are concerned about talking to someone face to face about a worry.

Staff know how to raise a concern about a pupil using the school's new electronic system. They are alert to possible low-level concerns involving adults. Leaders of safeguarding are very knowledgeable. They understand the multiple vulnerabilities that affect some pupils. They work closely with external organisations to help these pupils.

Leaders have increased the amount of help available in school to support pupils' mental health needs since the pandemic.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The science curriculum is not always implemented consistently well. Teachers do not always follow the planned order of the curriculum. Their pedagogical choices are not always well suited to the intended learning. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve are not sufficiently high. Some pupils disengage from their learning and produce poor-quality work. They cannot recall essential scientific knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that the science curriculum is followed precisely and implemented consistently well for the benefit of all pupils learning the subject.
- The majority of pupils know how to behave well and comply with the school's rules. However, some pupils are overly anxious about making a mistake and being sanctioned. Others feel that some of the rules are excessive. These concerns risk limiting pupils' full involvement in school life. Leaders should make sure that pupils understand the reasons for any rules and why they matter. They should help pupils play a positive role in creating the school environment, where all pupils can make a tangible contribution.
- Communication by leaders with parents is sometimes not as effective as it could be. Some parents feel that leaders do not keep them informed well enough about their decisions, for instance in relation to school uniform and procedures to manage pupils' behaviour and attendance. Leaders need to ensure that they keep parents up to date with information about the effective work they are doing to care for and support pupils.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136878
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10216619
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,905
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Richard Flewitt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Eardley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.toothillschool.co.uk">www.toothillschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 and 8 December 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2020, having been a deputy headteacher previously. The chair of the board of trustees took up the position in February 2021.
- The number of pupils on the school's roll has increased significantly since the school's previous inspection, including the number of students in the sixth form.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers and five unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the executive headteacher, senior school leaders, trust leaders and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with trustees, including the chair of the board of trustees, and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors did deep dives in five subjects: English, mathematics, history, design and technology and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons and considered pupils' work. They spoke with teachers and pupils. They heard pupils read. On the second day of the inspection, inspectors examined the curriculum in a wider range of subjects, including science.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of different year groups, including pupils with SEND. They spoke with pupils informally and observed the behaviour of pupils during social times.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of two of the alternative providers used by the school on the telephone.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks, holding discussions with the designated safeguarding lead, staff and pupils, and reviewing documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took note of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and leaders' plans for school improvement. They considered information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and suspensions, and the wider curriculum.

## Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Burton	Ofsted Inspector
Dick Vasey	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Wood	Ofsted Inspector

Paul Halcro

His Majesty's Inspector



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