

Thrapston Primary School Profile



Thrapston Primary School

Market Road, Thrapston

Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN14 4JU

Telephone: 01832 732512

<http://www.thrapston-primary.northants.sch.uk>

Children's Service Authority:	Northamptonshire
Age range:	3-9
Number of pupils:	479
Head teacher:	Mr C Morrison/Mrs M. Whittington
Chair of governors:	David Weston

What have been our successes this year?

Ofsted visited and said we were a "good school". Areas highlighted were good behaviour, the safe and healthy environment and good teaching. We achieve higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics compared to other pupils of the same age in England with our pupils being confident, happy and enjoying school.

Our eco-action team have continued to develop eco-awareness, and have been successful in negotiating with Sir Robert McAlpine to secure the acquisition and installation of 3 small wind turbines, which are now feeding back into our electricity supply to keep down our energy consumption. We are hoping to gain the "Green Flag" award during this school year (the highest award for schools).

The school council made significant contributions to school life again, introducing school jackets that children had requested. These are proving very popular!

Our Nursery was extended during the school summer break, providing a more comfortable, flexible and exciting space for our youngest children. We are all delighted with the change and feel that this represents very good value for money.

We successfully introduced French to the KS 2 children this year, and look forward to the second year of teaching for the Year 4 children.

What are we trying to improve?

We continue to strive to develop all areas of the curriculum so that children derive maximum benefit from their lessons regardless of their learning styles or interests. Cross-curricular themes, including themed weeks, continue to provide a backbone for many subject objectives, and we are trying to ensure that the curriculum is skills-led rather than content-led.

We are trying to improve our marking of mathematics so that children clearly understand their next steps in learning, and how to improve their skills. We are also aiming to improve children's problem solving skills this year.

We are introducing Science skills charts for children this year so that they can clearly see areas where they can develop.

How have our results changed over time?

Inevitably results change on an annual basis depending on the nature of the cohort of children being tested. We carefully analyse results each year, and study progression and achievement through each school year. Our results are generally in line or above national averages. We also look at areas of strength, and areas where we feel that improvements are possible, in order to guide our teaching and learning for the following year.

We use predictions of grades at Year 2 and Year 4, based on National samples, to assist us in early identification of children who may be underachieving.

Regular assessments are incorporated into our learning programmes and used to inform planning and teaching styles so that different groups of children can be targeted as appropriate. In addition, we treat every pupil as an individual so they know their next steps and their full potential can be realised.

The progress of children is regularly reported to parents and the governing body.

How are we making sure that every child gets teaching to meet their individual needs?

We consider all children to have Special Needs of some nature, and aim to treat all children as individuals. Accordingly, all lesson planning is carefully differentiated by staff. A regular programme of formal and informal assessments is also used to ensure that all children are progressing at an appropriate rate, and to inform teachers' planning to ensure that individual strengths and weaknesses can be addressed.

Single ability groupings are used when appropriate to the task in hand, but children also have opportunities to work in mixed-ability groups and social groups to facilitate the benefits that these allow.

Children identified as having particular needs, which may be linked to high or low learning potential or to emotional or behavioural problems, are brought to the attention of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, who will then work with the class teacher to develop an Individual Education Plan for each child. The Governors' policy on Special Educational Needs is regularly reviewed and amended as necessary.

Children may be included on our register for Gifted and Talented pupils. These children have an Individual Education Plan for the areas of the curriculum where their work needs further extension.

What have pupils told us about the school, and what have we done as a result?

Our established School Council has a boy and girl from each Year 3 and Year 4 class. Elected by the children in their class to represent them and the younger children. The Council meets every term with the Head, PSHE co-ordinator and a Governor.

Councillors collect views from their classmates, and are assigned to a younger class to collate their views. Pupils have termly Circle Time assemblies where they discuss issues relating to school life and learning. School councillors feed back comments and requests to the Council. As a result, children have an active part in improving their school environment.

Children told Ofsted in our latest visit (Feb 2009) that they felt safe in school; that bullying was not tolerated and was dealt with quickly; that everyone in school tried to care for each other; and that we were like a big family.

Children have enjoyed helping to design and set up the Eco Garden, and talk about it knowledgeably to visitors. They have asked for more play equipment on the playgrounds, and have helped to select suitable equipment within a budget. They have suggested and implemented different ways of ensuring children do not feel lonely on the playgrounds.

Children have said that they enjoy school - we aim to please!

How do we make sure our pupils are healthy, safe and well-supported?

The Governors conduct an annual Risk Assessment of the school buildings and grounds to ensure the safety of all pupils. Security measures have been taken to ensure that there is a minimal risk of intrusion or abduction. The governors regularly review their policies on Pupil Welfare and Health and Safety, taking into account national initiatives and parental views. Risk Assessments are carried out prior to all educational visits, and kept in an Educational Visit file.

Bullying is very rare; we pride ourselves on our warm, caring educational environment based upon mutual respect for all.

The school promotes healthy eating and the benefits of exercise, as noted in our latest OFSTED report. The school council is encouraged to research and debate ways of further improving our environment, and have initiated ideas such as friendship benches and extra playground equipment.

The school has set up "Positive Play" areas at lunchtimes, now being led by Year 4 pupils on each of the three playgrounds.

The school meals provided by our on-site canteen have earned 'Healthy Heartbeat' awards for eight years.

What activities and options are available to pupils?

In class, teachers strive to provide activities that will enable each child to learn in their preferred manner. Children regularly use visits, visitors and ICT (including the internet) to enhance their learning in all areas. Every class has three computers and an interactive whiteboard, and we have a computer suite, a Drama hall, a main hall, (gym), and a Music Room.

At lunchtime children in Years 1 to 4 can learn French and Spanish, and French is part of the curriculum from Year 3. From Year 2 onwards, pupils can engage in a variety of musical activities. After school, a range of sports, ICT, drama, further music and creative activities are available for Years 3 and 4.

Music is a strength of the school, with children learning to play woodwind, brass and stringed instruments. We have our own orchestra, and our Key Stage 2 choir, (Years 3 and 4), sings regularly at community events.

We have our own pond and wildlife area which children access with adult supervision either in lesson time when appropriate or at lunchtime in the summer months.

All classes participate in at least one out of school visit each year. Year 4 have a residential course each year.

How are we working with parents and the community?

We aim to work alongside parents to provide maximum benefit for our children. We maintain an approachable and welcoming ethos, and regularly consult with parents or invite comments when exploring new initiatives. We have a flourishing P.T.A. where the committee organises social and fund-raising events, and makes valued comments on whole school issues.

Parents are invited into school for weekly assemblies, open afternoons, and for two parent consultation evenings during the year. We also welcome them, after a CRB check, to help in school, and on special occasions like World Book Day, Red Nose Day, Science Week, and, of course, for school performances.

We have good links throughout the community and encourage community cohesion. Our children transfer easily to The King John Middle School. The choir sing at local care homes at Christmas, and we entertain World War II veterans, using them as a learning resource at the same time! We have developed good sporting links with local clubs, and we welcome members of the local clergy to take school assemblies every term.

Our website is updated often with details of the work being undertaken in each year group. Parents receive a written report on progress each year.

What do our pupils do after leaving this school?

The majority of our pupils continue their education at the King John Middle School in Thrapston, although one or two children each year move to education elsewhere in the locality, usually to the Public Schools at Kimbolton, Wellingborough and Oundle. We have termly meetings with the staff at King John to discuss continuity and progression, and our Year 4 children use their Science laboratories during their final year here.

In the Summer term before transfer, the Head of Year 5 at King John makes regular visits here to speak to our Year 4 children in small groups, and get to know them. Extensive written records are also, of course, passed to King John staff.

Our Year 3 and 4 children join with Year 5 at King John each year to enjoy a morning of communal singing. We visit each other at Christmas to watch our Christmas performances, and the older children meet to share sports festivals. We also share a large sports field with King John, beside the two schools, enabling us to make wide provision in football, rugby, cricket and athletics.

Ofsted's view of our school

This is a good school with several outstanding features and the school agrees with this view. Pupils are encouraged to develop a wide range of interests and achieve well socially and academically. They make good progress. Standards are better than those of similar schools because teaching and learning are good. Attention to ensure their well-being is good and pupils are prepared well to become responsible young citizens in the future.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. They make an excellent start and quickly develop a lively and enduring interest in learning. Good attention is paid to meeting pupils' needs throughout the school and all pupils have full access to everything the school provides. The school has a satisfactory understanding of how well it is doing but recognises the need to check pupils' progress more rigorously and give them greater responsibility for their learning.

Links with other organisations, including pre-school groups and the neighbouring middle school, are good. This helps to ensure that pupils make good progress at each stage of their learning. Most parents are very pleased with all that the school provides to ensure their children are happy and well cared for. However, a significant minority, (17 per cent of those who replied to the questionnaire) felt that the school could take more account of parents' views, suggestions and concerns.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Governors and staff acknowledge that they need to become more involved in planning for improvement and checking the impact of their decisions on pupils' learning. They are well placed to do so. The school environment is of high quality. It is vibrant, very well equipped and a place where pupils feel valued. The school is led and managed well and gives good value for money.

Date of last inspection: 18-May-2005

Ofsted graded our school as good

Inspectors made judgements on a scale: outstanding (grade 1); good (2); satisfactory (3); inadequate (4).



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What have we done in response to Ofsted?

We are working to maintain the positive points raised by Ofsted whilst also working at improving the few areas identified for further action.

We are reviewing the way that we mark work in all subjects to ensure that the marking always gives the children constructive and useful feedback and, where possible, indicators for how their work could be improved.

The governors are reviewing all that we do in the school to promote Community Cohesion, and are developing their policy to ensure all aspects are addressed in school.

We are setting up problem solving challenges in most year groups, and emphasising problem solving skills for all children so that they can more readily apply their knowledge to real life situations.

We have extended the Nursery building so that there is room for a greater variety of interesting and exciting activities inside, as well as reviewing resources and storage for outdoor equipment to ensure that all areas of the curriculum can be developed through outdoor play activities.

More Information

If you would like more information about school policies, including our policies on special educational needs and disability, admissions, finance, school food and our complaints procedure, please contact us:

01832 732512

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