

Inspection of Town Lane Infant School

Town Lane, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 8LD

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The headteacher of this school is Kate Large. This school is part of Concordia Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Tracy Webb, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Keith.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since January 2011.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Town Lane Infant School. They are happy and love to learn. The school is aspirational for all pupils, including children in the early years. Pupils become curious and independent learners. They talked confidently about their learning and they take immense pride in their written work. Pupils develop an impressive array of skills and knowledge. They achieve highly. They are exceptionally well equipped for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They think of others and know how important it is for everyone to be treated the same. They are attentive in lessons. Pupils are extremely polite and courteous with staff and one another. Pupils of all ages are proud to enact the school rules by being 'ready, respectful and safe'.

Pupils benefit from the high-quality experiences that the school provides. Older pupils make a valuable contribution to the life of the school through a range of leadership responsibilities. For example, playground buddies ensure that everyone has someone to play with at playtime. Pupils develop their skills and talents by attending a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, including eco-club, art and science club.

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

The school has crafted a highly ambitious curriculum that captures pupils' interests and excites them about their learning. The school makes sure that the most important knowledge that pupils need for future learning is identified. Careful thought has been given to the way in which infant pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn. This has resulted in curriculums that are connected in meaningful ways. This enables pupils to make links in their learning, so that they gain a strong and secure body of knowledge by the time that they leave Year 2.

Staff have strong subject knowledge. They are clear about what to teach and when this should happen. They regularly check on how well pupils are learning. Staff ensure that these checks inform future teaching. The most important knowledge that pupils need to learn is revisited often. Staff also skilfully explain more difficult concepts by breaking them down into smaller parts. This enables pupils to understand new learning and to remember what they have learned over time.

Children in the early years, including two-year-olds, develop their confidence and independence in a caring environment. They benefit from an exceptionally well-thought-out curriculum. Children's curiosity is ignited through the wide range of engaging opportunities on offer to them. Highly skilled staff ensure that all children in the early years achieve well, so that they are very well prepared for Year 1.

Reading has the highest priority. The phonics programme is delivered consistently well by expert staff. As a result, pupils develop a secure reading knowledge. Most children have a secure knowledge of phonics by the end of the Reception Year. Pupils in key stage 1 continue to develop this knowledge, so that they can read with fluency and accuracy. The small number of pupils who fall behind where they should be in the phonics programme are identified quickly and supported effectively to catch up. Reading books are very well matched to the sounds that pupils know. This ensures that pupils can practise reading and enjoy success. A wide range of high-quality books help pupils to develop a love of reading.

The school identifies pupils' additional needs quickly. Pupils with SEND benefit from the expert support offered by staff. This helps pupils to learn successfully alongside their classmates. Pupils with SEND progress well through the curriculum.

The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils understand how to keep healthy and stay safe. They know that they have a voice in school. Pupils develop into responsible young citizens. For example, pupils successfully pitched ideas for a new, sustainable building to their local Member of Parliament. Pupils understand why it is fair that school council members are chosen through the process of voting. The school very carefully considers the interests of pupils when it decides on the wide range of clubs, trips and visitors on offer. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to take part in performances and exhibitions. The proportion of pupils, including those with SEND, who take part in these opportunities is high.

The school has very high expectations of behaviour. Children in the early years quickly settle into the routines of school. They listen attentively and take great delight when they play and learn together. Pupils of all ages behave exceptionally well in classrooms, around school and at playtime and lunchtime. Older pupils demonstrate a maturity beyond their years. They are sensible and act as excellent role models for younger pupils. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their learning.

Regular communication between the school and parents and carers supports pupils' learning. For example, in the two-year-old provision, parents shared photographs from Bonfire Night. Children were eager to practise their language skills when staff showed these in class. Children spoke about what they remembered and about their families excitedly.

Those responsible for leading the school work together effectively. The local academy board knows the school well. The board greatly appreciate the support of the trust. For example, the trust has taken on responsibility for some services, which has enabled the school to focus on teaching and learning. In return, the school generously shares their expertise across other trust schools.

The school ensures that it carefully considers staff's workload when bringing about change. Staff value the many opportunities provided to develop their expertise. This includes engaging in their own research. As a result, staff feel valued and are happy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	143391
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10211809
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Keith
CEO	Tracy Webb
Headteacher	Kate Large
Website	www.townlane.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of Concordia Multi-Academy Trust.
- Town Lane Infant School converted to become an academy in June 2018. When its predecessor school, Town Lane Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- There is provision for two-year-old children in the early years.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, design and technology and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at a sample of pupils' books and spoke with pupils.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around school, at playtimes and lunchtime. They discussed behaviour and bullying with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.
- Inspectors considered the views of the parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments. In addition, inspectors spoke with parents in the morning at the school gate.
- An inspector spoke to members of the local academy board, including the chair of the board.
- An inspector spoke with school leaders and representatives of the trust, including the CEO.

Inspection team

Frith Murphy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sandra Hamilton

Ofsted Inspector

Louise Smith

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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