

# Rockmount Primary School

Chevening Road, Upper Norwood, London, SE19 3ST

**Inspection dates** 20–21 May 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Leadership is extremely strong and has improved all aspects of the school's work. Staff and parents support leaders in their continuing quest for improvement.
- Leaders and governors are highly effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching is outstanding, so that pupils make exceptional progress.
- Leaders, governors and middle leaders work and plan together well to ensure the school sustains its upward journey of improvement.
- The subjects pupils learn prepare them extremely effectively for the next stage of schooling. Pupils learn to be responsible citizens, inspired by the school's strong moral values. They are encouraged to think for themselves.
- Governance is exceptionally strong. Governors are ready to take decisive action where needed. Working closely with leaders, they ensure that teaching and learning are of the highest quality.
- Leaders and governors work closely with parents and keep them well informed.
- Pupils behave extremely well and are polite and considerate towards others. They get on very well with one another.
- Pupils are eager to learn. From the earliest years in the Nursery and Reception classes, children pay close attention to what they are taught.
- Pupils are keen to improve the school. They have many opportunities in which to present their own ideas and to make a difference.
- Lunch arrangements are civilised and promote sociable behaviour. Pupils who are looked after before and after school receive exemplary care.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. It prepares pupils extremely well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils feel safe at school and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Teaching is outstanding, enabling pupils of all capabilities to make rapid and sustained progress.
- Teaching enables pupils to learn strong skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is challenging and stimulating, helping pupils to learn for themselves.
- Teachers make sure that pupils understand what they need to do to make progress.
- Marking, particularly in pupils' English and mathematics books, offers considerable guidance on how to improve. Marking in pupils' topic books is not always of the same high quality.
- Pupils who have a range of additional needs make exceptionally strong progress throughout the school. Disadvantaged pupils achieve extremely well. No group of pupils falls behind.
- Children in the early years are given an excellent start to their schooling. They learn exceptionally well through stimulating activities. Adults promote their imagination and make learning exciting.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 29 lessons across a range of subjects. Around a third were observed jointly with the heads of school.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils, listened to them read and looked at samples of their work. An inspector met a group of pupils to hear how they felt about the school.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including those who hold responsibility for specific subjects. A meeting was held with the local authority’s Teaching and Learning Improvement Advisor. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the two Vice-Chairs and one other governor.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 39 questionnaires.
- Inspectors took into account the 97 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of a parental questionnaire provided by the school.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents. These included the school’s own views of how well it is doing, its plans for the future and the minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence on pupils’ attainment and progress. Inspectors also examined safeguarding information and records relating to behaviour and safety.

## Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Markham

Additional Inspector

Timothy Wilson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Rockmount is much larger in size than the average primary school.
- The executive headteacher also supports schools in other parts of the country.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is higher than average. The funding is used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic heritages is much higher than average. Pupils come from a wide range of heritages, with no one group predominating.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is higher than average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school care club.
- Around half of children attend the Nursery for the full day. The rest attend part time, either in the morning or in the afternoon sessions. Children in Reception attend full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

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

- Make sure that marking in pupils' topic books meets the same high standards as that in their English and mathematics books.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders continually strive for excellence. No aspect of the school's work is overlooked. They have improved ways of checking pupils' progress. As a result, all members of staff understand how well the pupils are learning and take responsibility for raising standards.
- Leaders and governors understand the strengths of their school and what remains to be done. They are so keen to improve the school that they demand a great deal of themselves, always wanting to provide more for the pupils. Their plans for the future are ambitious and focused on raising pupils' achievement.
- Staff back the improvements leaders have made. A typical comment from one was, 'Rockmount has very clear systems which are explained clearly to staff.' Another commented: 'The headteacher is effective and efficient. Both heads of school are courteous towards staff.' As a result, the school is a happy environment in which teaching and pupils' behaviour can flourish.
- Leaders manage the quality of teaching strongly. Staff set their own performance targets based on standards expected of the teaching profession. Senior and middle leaders rigorously check that these standards are met. They visit lessons, look at pupils' work and speak to staff and pupils. These discussions feed into planning for improvements.
- As a result of strong leadership, the quality of learning for all groups of pupils has risen sharply over recent years. Leaders make excellent use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to provide them with high-quality teaching and support. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils at the school and better than other pupils nationally.
- Middle leaders play an important part in school improvement. Because of their vigilance in checking the work of pupils and staff in their areas of responsibility, standards of reading, writing and mathematics have risen over recent years.
- The school promotes equal opportunities strongly. All have the same chance to succeed. Relations within the school are excellent. There is no discrimination against anyone.
- Leaders and middle leaders use the additional government funding for primary school sports extremely well. For example, sports coaching ensures that pupils lead sustainably healthy lives. The sports activities in the lunch breaks have a highly positive impact on behaviour, as pupils use their energies constructively in playing tennis or football.
- The local authority works well with the school and provides regular and helpful advice. It has recognised the special quality of the school's work by awarding it the title of 'primary school of the year' within the borough.
- The school engages extremely well with parents. A particularly strong feature is the close link between governors and parents. Governors take the initiative to produce an attractive and informative magazine for parents, so that they know the direction the school is taking and what its future plans are. Parents who gave their views to inspectors, through Parent View or the school's own survey, are overwhelmingly positive about the school.
- Leaders and governors carry out extremely effectively their obligation to keep pupils safe. They ensure that all staff are properly trained and play a full part in protecting children.
- The subjects pupils learn at school have a strong focus on their literacy and numeracy. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped with the skills they need for the next phase of schooling. Other subjects are not neglected and, in fact, are used to give pupils an all-round understanding of the world they live in. For example, on one day during the inspection, Year 3 pupils came to school dressed in ancient Greek chitons with gold wreaths on their heads. The theme was used extremely successfully to promote pupils' understanding of history and mathematics, and to inspire their writing.
- Outside the classroom pupils are given an extremely wide range of experiences. Pupils are taken to museums, to the theatre and to farms and nature reserves. Such opportunities raise their aspirations and widen their horizons.
- The school's work in teaching pupils British values and preparing them for life in modern Britain is extremely strong. Pupils learn to be responsible citizens and to think of the needs of others. For example, school council members were recently taken to visit the House of Commons, and the school ran its own general election to get pupils to think about making choices between conflicting views. As a result, pupils are encouraged to think for themselves.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is extremely strong. Governors are ready to take decisive action whenever it is needed. They know the school very well. They are not afraid to ask leaders searching questions in order to hold the school to account. One governor commented, 'We drive the leaders but they drive themselves.'

- Governors have a thorough understanding of how well pupils do in comparison to those in the country as a whole. They receive full information from the school, presented clearly. They also use published sources of information to deepen their understanding of how well pupils achieve at the school.
- Governors visit the school to check its work for themselves. They talk to pupils and look at displays, and in such ways they see for themselves how well pupils are learning.
- Governors have a strong impact on raising the quality of teaching. They make sure that teachers' movement along the pay scales is linked to the progress pupils are making. They are not afraid to tackle any underperformance, should it occur. As a result, the school secures excellent value for money from its staff.
- Governors are very well trained and carry out extremely effectively their statutory obligations to keep pupils safe and secure.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils from all backgrounds and heritages get on extremely well together. They are considerate and take care of their environment, for example by acting as Eco-councillors. They take full advantage of the excellent opportunities they are given to let off steam safely, while learning new sports skills.
- Pupils are eager to learn. When pupils are asked questions, they are quick to respond. They discuss topics with one another enthusiastically and work together cooperatively when required.
- Pupils are excellent ambassadors for their school. Those who spoke to inspectors were proud of the contribution they are encouraged to make to the school. For example, one peer mediator, whose job is to sort out disagreements among fellow pupils, commented, 'You learn the skills of a youth leader.'
- Pupils are ready to play their part in improving the school. For example, a group researched which trees would grow best in the playground and presented their case to the contractors, who accepted their suggestions.
- Lunch arrangements are delightful and contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils sit at round tables, which help them to chat sociably. In the Nursery, children who stay for lunch eat in the security of their familiar areas. Children sitting on the grass having a picnic lunch in fine weather got on extremely well with one another. The adults took every opportunity to talk to the children to develop their language skills.
- Pupils who attend breakfast club or who are cared for after school are looked after very well. They are given healthy, appetising food and a wealth of activities to keep them busy. They are kept extremely safe.
- Pupils show their love of learning and the school through their attendance, which has been above average for some years and is on a rising trend.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Many lessons have a strong focus on cultural and moral issues. For example, Year 6 pupils weighed up thoughtfully the evidence for and against hunting narwhals, balancing the need for conservation against respect for the Inuit hunting tradition.
- An assembly for pupils in Years 5 and 6 promoted moral and social development when a group of pupils in biking gear confidently explained to fellow pupils the benefits of cycling and why they were taking part in a race. Pupils' spiritual needs are met through moments of reflection in assembly and through the quiet way they listen to classical music at the start and end of assembly.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous. Adults who work with children are scrupulously checked. Staff and governors receive thorough safeguarding training.
- Pupils are safe from bullying. Those who spoke to inspectors understand what is meant by bullying. They confirm that there is no actual bullying. Should they have any worries or concerns, they know which adults to turn to. School records confirm that incidents of unkindness are few and far between.
- The school teaches pupils to keep themselves safe. They are highly aware of potential dangers when using computers at home. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe because there are regular fire drills. They are taught to take care on the roads and to be aware of possible danger from strangers.

**The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because it enables pupils to make outstanding progress in their learning. Pupils' work in their books shows that teaching is of consistently high quality over time.
- All the adults, whether teachers or assistants, work extremely well together. Their close attention to the needs of each individual enables pupils of all abilities and those with a range of additional needs to make similarly rapid progress.
- Pupils learn extremely well because, in the words of one pupil, 'If you work hard you will get rewarded.' The reward is not material but the sense of achievement that comes from work well done. For example, in one Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were excited by the activity in which one pupil felt a cuboid inside a bag and described it to the other pupils by saying how many edges, faces and corners it had. The pupils guessing were delighted when they got the answer right and this satisfaction was its own reward.
- Pupils learn exceptionally well because they are clear about the steps they need to take to make progress towards meeting their personal targets. Tasks are challenging and a great deal is expected from all pupils.
- Marking, particularly in pupils' English and mathematics books, provides extremely valuable guidance on how to improve. Pupils respond by doing their very best. Occasionally, however, pupils' topic books are not marked so fully and helpfully, and then pupils try less hard.
- Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to extend their learning continually. For example, in one Year 4 grammar lesson, pupils were asked to explain the root of words ending with the suffix 'ous'. A pupil who suggested that 'fab' was the root of 'fabulous', rather than 'fable', was helped to understand that 'fab' is a colloquialism and ended up with a new concept to think about.
- Reading is a very strong area of the school's work. Pupils who read aloud to inspectors were able to read unfamiliar words because they had been taught their sounds and letters (phonics) very securely when they were younger. They confirmed that the school encourages them to read widely and this rubs off on them so that they read for pleasure at home.
- Pupils' writing is of high quality because their learning inspires them. Pupils write imaginatively about the topics they learn, varying from dinosaurs to the moon landings of the 1960s. The range of topics promotes excellent writing skills. Pupils reflect their pride in their work through their neatly presented books.
- Pupils learn mathematics extremely well because adults expect a great deal from them. Pupils in Year 3 were able to debate whether triangles have lines of symmetry 'always, sometimes or never'. Their debate showed high levels of understanding, reflecting excellent teaching over time.

**The achievement of pupils** is outstanding

- Pupils learn exceptionally well at Rockmount. In each phase of school life, (the early years, Key Stages 1 and 2), pupils make remarkably rapid progress.
- By the time they leave Year 6, pupils' attainment is securely above average in all subjects. The strongest subject is reading but mathematics and writing are not far behind. School figures show that current Year 6 pupils are likely to continue this pattern. For example, over half are predicted to gain Level 5 in both reading and mathematics, with two out of five expected to gain Level 5 in writing. These proportions are well above average for the country as a whole.
- All groups achieve well at the school and no group falls behind. Pupils from all backgrounds and heritages do well. Pupils who arrive at the school with a limited grasp of English are quickly identified and supported. As the school is such a friendly and welcoming place, they quickly make friends with staff and fellow pupils; this helps them build fluency in speaking. They receive individual support and make as strong progress in their learning as do other groups. By the time they leave, pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well or better than other pupils.
- The most-able pupils are challenged to learn as well as they can. They receive extra challenge through additional activities. The extremely capable teaching assistants work with talented learners as well as with those who struggle with their work. This enables all to make strong progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils do extremely well. School figures show that the 2015 Year 6 cohort is likely to attain more highly than other pupils nationally in the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with other pupils at the school, there is scarcely any difference in the attainment of the two groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils consistently make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They are far ahead of other pupils nationally in all subjects for the proportions making expected progress (two levels from Year 2) and more than expected progress (three levels from Year 2).
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs far outperform their national counterparts.

This is because the school is vigorous in identifying their needs early. The school provides extremely effective support and frequently checks to ensure that the support continues to be effective. As a result of such vigilance, pupils with a range of additional needs do extremely well in their learning.

### The early years provision

is outstanding

- The Nursery and Reception classes give children an excellent start to their journey of learning. The play areas, both indoors and outdoors, provide wonderful opportunities for the children to encounter new ideas and magical experiences.
- The early years provision is extremely well led by the coordinator, working in close partnership with senior leaders. They carefully check how well the children are learning and clearly record their findings. Such close scrutiny of each child's achievement helps the adults to put the right support in place to enable each child to learn as well as possible. Leaders plan activities extremely well so that children benefit from a wide range of activities every day.
- In this secure and happy environment children play peaceably together, behave extremely well and show respect for each other and adults. They are ready to wait their turn and to share the play equipment. Children enjoy learning and concentrate on tasks until they are finished. The site is safe and secure. The outdoor play areas are safe while having just the right amount of adventure in the climbing and exploring areas.
- Teaching in the early years is outstanding. The adults are ready to enter the children's world of imagination. Staff make excellent use of the children's enthusiasm to help them to practise and learn new skills. For example, the treasure island theme was used to promote mark-making skills in drawing maps of buried treasure.
- Children make an excellent start in learning to read, write and understand numbers and shapes. The many quiet corners where children and adults read together promote an early love of books. Children learn their sounds and letters (phonics) in short sessions in small groups. These are highly effective in meeting their varying needs. This is also the case with number skills, where each adult has a strong impact on meeting the needs of individual children.
- Children love learning and as a result make rapid progress. One child rushed up to an inspector and announced: 'Octopuses (*sic*) have blue blood. They have three hearts.' Such excitement in learning results in children making extremely strong progress throughout the early years, leaving with skills that are far above those found in the country as a whole.
- The school makes sure that the transition from early years to Year 1 is as positive and enjoyable for the children as possible. By the time they begin their new phase of learning, they are confident, secure and equipped with extremely strong skills.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101783
<b>Local authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	448227

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	500
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jonny Moore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Wilson (Executive Headteacher), Helen Carvall (Joint Head of School), Tracey Langridge (Joint Head of School)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8653 2619
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8240 9699
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