

St Robert Southwell RC Primary School

Slough Lane, Kingsbury, London NW9 8YD

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership, modelling exemplary practice for her team. This creates a school environment where all staff feel empowered to do their very best.
- Leaders and governors have been resolute in their actions to improve the school from good to outstanding. They identify any emerging weaknesses and address them promptly.
- High-quality leadership and teaching create a stimulating learning environment and ensure that children have the best possible start to school life.
- Children get off to a flying start in the early years and make strong progress. This is because they experience outstanding learning and care through a wide range of exciting activities. Children leave Reception very well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is highly effective. Teachers' questioning encourages pupils to deepen their thinking, and this contributes to pupils' strong learning over time.
- The precise tracking of pupils' progress across the curriculum enables leaders and teachers to have a detailed understanding of how well pupils are doing and they ensure appropriate support so that pupils improve.
- Leaders are diligent in carrying out their safeguarding duties. As a result, pupils' welfare needs are met very well.
- Parents and carers are extremely supportive and strongly appreciative of the school.
- Leaders ensure that there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) understanding. This helps to sustain a nurturing environment in which pupils thrive and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They have extremely positive attitudes and rise to leaders' expectations that they will make every effort to succeed. Pupils say that bullying is rare.
- Leaders are further developing curriculum plans for foundation subjects so that pupils build on their prior learning even more.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors should ensure that new plans for the foundation curriculum consider the sequencing of learning in order to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding even more successfully, and that these plans are implemented effectively.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders, ably led by the headteacher, are uncompromising in their determination to continually improve pupils' outcomes. They have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and any relative weaknesses which emerge. They use this information to routinely fine-tune their systems and processes to realise the required improvements.
- The staff's morale is high. Staff have the utmost regard for the support that leaders offer and feel that their opinions and thoughts are valued. All the staff spoken to and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire are proud to work at the school. They said that leaders take account of their well-being and policies are managed thoughtfully, giving due consideration to workload. Teachers typically feel that leaders have taken active steps to ensure that planning and marking are more manageable, without impacting negatively on pupils' learning and progress.
- Subject leaders are highly effective. They are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in their subjects. As a result, subject leaders have a clear overview of standards in their subjects. Their development plans support pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. The positive impact of their subject leadership is evident in the work in pupils' books.
- Parents are exceedingly supportive of the school. Many told inspectors about the 'lovely, caring' and 'nurturing' environment in the school. A high number of parents feel their children are both safe and very happy at school.
- Leaders have developed a thematic curriculum which makes links between subjects and provides purposeful learning opportunities for pupils. The broad curriculum contributes well to pupils' strong understanding of SMSC. However, while pupils learn well within a unit of work, the curriculum in some foundation subjects, such as geography, is not always designed with enough continuity from one year to the next.
- Leaders have high aspirations for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result of targeted support through effective use of funding, these groups of pupils are making very good progress across the curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that the additional funding for physical education and sport is used effectively. As a result, pupils receive excellent opportunities to improve their health and physical fitness through a wide range of activities, both within and beyond the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very well informed and highly skilled, with a wide range of knowledge and expertise. They have a secure grasp of the school's performance and ask challenging questions of leaders. Their awareness of the school's work and extensive knowledge of the community enable them to make highly effective contributions to improvement planning.
- Governors are fully committed to the pursuit of excellence. They are hugely supportive

of the school's work in encouraging all pupils to 'be the best they can be' and to do all they can to remove any barriers that may prevent pupils from achieving well.

- Governors visit the school regularly. They meet with staff and leaders, which deepens their understanding of the school's priorities. For example, as part of governor link visits, they meet with pupils and staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The culture to keep children safe is extremely strong. Leaders follow the proper procedures to recruit staff to work with children.
- Staff are very well trained and know their legal duties well. They are fully aware of their responsibilities to keep children safe in education. Staff know how to report any concerns they have and are confident that leaders will address them quickly.
- Leaders are persistent in cases where the school is concerned for a pupil's welfare. Effective relationships with other agencies and with parents ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge as a result of the high-quality training provided by leaders, including subject leaders. They are highly skilled in using the kind of questions that challenge pupils' thinking and which help pupils to build connections between different aspects of their learning.
- Teachers have the expertise to anticipate pupils' likely misconceptions and step in to correct them when they happen. This helps pupils to be secure in their understanding.
- Observations of lessons and of the work in pupils' books show that teachers build successfully on what pupils already know and can do. Pupils have time to try out and practise their new learning so that they are secure before moving to the next step. For example, in their writing books, pupils' practise of new sentence structures and writing techniques leads to confidence in the application of their skills in future work. The impact on pupils' progress, including that of the most able pupils, is evident in the work they produce.
- The teaching of phonics and reading is very effective. Pupils learn phonics extremely well and use their understanding of phonics to develop good reading skills. Pupils also use phonics effectively to support their spelling as they develop their impressive writing skills.
- Teaching of mathematics is very successfully allowing pupils to solve mathematical problems and explain their reasoning behind their answers. Pupils eagerly choose challenge questions if they have accurately completed their set mathematical work. Consequently, pupils make rapid progress in mathematics.
- Highly skilled and knowledgeable teaching assistants are very effective. They expertly support pupils' learning in and outside of classes. As a result, pupils with SEND, and pupils needing additional support with learning, make strong progress from their starting points.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The strongly positive relationships which have been established over time, between pupils and adults, and among the pupils themselves, are abundantly evident across the school. Pupils greet adults warmly, with impeccable manners, and show frequent acts of supportive kindness towards each other.
- Pupils have high expectations of themselves in terms of their work and personal presentation. They wear their uniforms with pride and produce work which is consistently neat and tidy. Pupils are ambitious for their future lives and speak confidently of the careers they would like to pursue.
- Staff provide pupils with many opportunities to take positions of responsibility across the school, and pupils carry these out conscientiously. Pupils regularly contribute their ideas about how to make the school even better through regular votes about key issues and through their effective student council.
- Pupils were very clear that instances of bullying are extremely rare, and this was confirmed by checking leaders' records. Pupils have received effective teaching about bullying and their understanding of the issues is mature and appropriate.
- Pupils feel safe at school and know how to keep themselves safe at school and at home. Pupils understand the risks associated with using computers and know how to stay safe online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' conduct in lessons and at social times is excellent. They move around school from lesson to lesson purposefully, quickly and calmly.
- The school is a caring, nurturing and happy place to be, because leaders and staff have cultivated an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance that permeates all aspects of pupils' experiences.
- Incidents of poor behaviour requiring exclusion are very rare. There have been no permanent exclusions over recent years. In discussion, pupils showed understanding of the school's behaviour policy, rewards and consequences. However, reminders are rarely required as pupils respond very well to adults' high expectations and to the interesting activities provided for them.
- Parents reported that their children are happy at the school. Pupils attend the school regularly. Leaders have raised the profile of attendance across the whole school and work hard to raise awareness among families of how important good attendance is to a pupil's education. As a result, the attendance and persistent absence of pupils are in line with national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Leaders and governors are passionate about ensuring the highest possible standards for every pupil. Consequently, the progress of pupils currently in school and over time is consistently high in mathematics and above average for reading and writing.
- The most able pupils are challenged well, resulting in a good proportion achieving a greater depth of understanding in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils enjoy reading widely and hold sophisticated, rich discussions about the books they read. They receive excellent support to read to a high standard and develop their comprehension skills. Pupils are very proud of the progress they make and show a keen interest in the wide variety of texts they read.
- Pupils in all year groups make excellent progress in English, mathematics and across a wide range of other subjects. The work in pupils' books shows how well they have developed and how well they apply their knowledge, skills and understanding. The school has rightly focused on the progress boys make in English and current school information shows that their progress is accelerating.
- In 2017 and 2018, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 that achieved the expected standard in phonics was substantially higher than was the case nationally. In both years, nearly all pupils achieved the expected standard in phonics.
- Because leaders carefully check pupils' progress and provide effective support, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND make strong progress.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years leader and her team are passionate about ensuring that all children achieve their full potential. Leaders use their knowledge of the children and their skills in assessment to adapt the curriculum. They devise activities which equip children with the skills they need to settle quickly and make the most of their learning.
- The safeguarding procedures in the early years match the effective practice seen across the school. The area is safe and, consequently, children are cared for very well.
- Staff model excellent relationships and have high expectations of the children. As a result, children's social skills are of a high order. Adults are quick to establish rules and routines. Therefore, personal, social and emotional skills are outstanding.
- Both inside and outside, staff provide a wide range of stimulating activities to support children's learning. In particular, activities are precisely and effectively targeted towards supporting children's language, phonics and social and emotional development. Children receive daily direct teaching in key skills such as mathematics, writing and phonics. Across the provision, staff take every opportunity to gently move children forward in their learning, by their use of questioning and modelling the behaviour they wish to see.
- The very well-resourced and inviting outdoor area provides an invaluable stimulus for learning for both the Nursery and Reception children. Staff skilfully adapt the focus of the outdoor activities as the year evolves, in response to the developing needs of the

children, such as in speaking, listening and developing independence.

- Staff and parents have very strong relationships that start before a child joins Nursery or Reception. Staff carefully consider the views of parents when planning the provision for the children. They also provide many workshops for parents to find out how they can support their children at home. The strong partnership between parents and staff contributes to the successful transitions that children make into their next steps in education.

School details

Unique reference number	101543
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10058840

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	441
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Manning
Headteacher	Miss Honor Beck
Telephone number	02082046148
Website	www.robsouth.org
Email address	admin@robsouth.brent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 January 2018

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average voluntary aided primary school of Catholic denomination.
- The school is in the lowest 20% of schools for deprivation.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and a number of after-school clubs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school. Most of the observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher and the assistant headteachers. Inspectors listened to some pupils read and talked to several groups of pupils about their experience of school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and subject leaders. A meeting was held with several members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. A meeting also took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked, jointly with leaders, at a range of pupils' work in books, along with the school's information on pupils' achievement, to determine the progress that they are making.
- A range of documentation was considered. This included the school's self-evaluation, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, the school improvement plan, information relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils, safeguarding and child protection records, and minutes from governing body meetings. Documents outlining the arrangements for the use of pupil premium funding were also considered.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day to seek their views about the school. The 261 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the 30 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 50 responses to the pupil questionnaire were also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Michelle Thomas, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Kanwaljit Singh	Ofsted Inspector
Sean Flood	Ofsted Inspector

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