

Inspection of Roundwood Primary School

Roundwood Park, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 3AD

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 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?

Pupils in Year 6 have the chance to become 'big friendly giants'. This reflects the friendly, supportive nature of the school. Older pupils want to support younger pupils and make sure they are happy. Pupils are kind, considerate and respect their friends and adults. Pupils use kind words; they make sure no one is lonely or left out when playing outdoors. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

Pupils say that bullying is rare. If bullying does occur, they know that an adult will quickly sort it out.

Pupils learn strategies to manage their own behaviour. Staff have high expectations that pupils will be polite, well-mannered and work hard. Pupils behave well. They work in a calm, positive atmosphere and are learning how to be increasingly independent.

Pupils benefit from the high expectations that teachers have for them. They like the challenging work teachers set them and enjoy learning new things.

Parents feel that the school provides very positive experiences for their children. They feel that leaders have high expectations for behaviour and the quality of education.

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

Leaders have clearly set out what they expect pupils to learn. Recently, the diversity of pupils coming to the school has changed. Leaders know this and have skilfully adapted the curriculum, maintaining the highest expectations for all pupils. Pupils learn about things that excite and motivate them. They can talk articulately about things they have learned. They are excited to share knowledge and debate ideas with their friends.

Leaders have prioritised areas of the curriculum that they feel will support pupils most effectively. This has been particularly important since all pupils returned to school in September. Leaders have checked carefully where there are gaps in pupils' learning. To make sure pupils do not fall behind, leaders have reordered and revisited parts of the curriculum. This is helping pupils catch up with the important knowledge they may have missed because of the pandemic, particularly in English and mathematics.

The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with staff to ensure that pupils with SEND have the support they need to be successful in school. All pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Leaders make sure that all pupils have access to a high-quality reading curriculum. From the early years, pupils receive precise, accurate teaching. Pupils quickly gain the knowledge they need to become confident, fluent readers. Leaders carry out regular checks to ensure that pupils are on track with their reading. They ensure that any pupil who may be at risk of falling behind receives the support they need to catch up quickly. Teachers carefully match books to the knowledge pupils have. Pupils are guided by teachers to read books that help develop their love of reading.

Subject leaders know what they want the pupils to learn. They have plans in place to help pupils develop suitable knowledge in most subjects. However, in some subjects, further staff training is required to make sure that the curriculum is fully connected from early years foundation stage (EYFS) to Year 6. At present, what pupils achieve across the curriculum, in different subjects, is variable.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils can talk about how school helps prepare them for a changing world. Pupils understand that others may come from different backgrounds and have had different experiences. Pupils know about healthy relationships. Leaders have skilfully adapted the relationships and sex education curriculum. This means that pupils are taught the right things at the right time, appropriate to their age. Pupils learn how to stay healthy. Pupils learn strategies to help them manage their own emotions and behaviour.

Governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They ensure that, through their work, leaders make a positive difference to the quality of education pupils receive. There have been many recent changes to the governing body. Effective induction and training have enabled new governors to understand school priorities quickly. Governors assure themselves that systems to safeguard pupils and staff are robust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put in place clear, robust systems to ensure that they do everything they can to keep pupils safe. Records are well maintained, comprehensive and monitored by a range of leaders for quality assurance. The designated safeguarding leaders work diligently to track and monitor all potential concerns. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to ensure that children and families get the support they need.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training. This keeps their knowledge up to date. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities, as well as the school's procedures for reporting concerns. Staff are alert to any signs of concern. The curriculum helps pupils learn what they need to do to help keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans in some subjects are not fully embedded from EYFS to Year 6. This means that teachers are not always clear about what to plan, based on what pupils have learned before. Pupils do not develop the rich knowledge that will deepen and secure their understanding in these subjects. Leaders need to make sure that subject-specific training helps staff to plan to a consistently high level across the curriculum.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	117211
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10199306
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Catherine Marke
Headteacher	Kate Hooft
Website	www.roundwoodprimary.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2006, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since April 2020.
- The chair of the governing body was appointed in the autumn term 2021.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language has recently increased.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, physical education and geography. The inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. The inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.
- The inspectors listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.

- The inspectors met with the SENCo and members of the local governing body and spoke to an independent educational consultant who works with the school.
- The inspectors looked at the single central record and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors, and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspectors considered the 123 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including free-text responses. The inspectors also considered the 34 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 189 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Isabel Davis	Her Majesty's Inspector
Charlie Fordham	Her Majesty's Inspector

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