

Inspection of a good school: Rockingham Primary School

Rockingham Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 1AJ

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

Outcome

Rockingham Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their caring school. Staff help them to feel confident and ready for what comes next. Pupils respect their helpful teachers. They explain: 'Teachers don't put you down. They pick you up.'

Pupils enjoy their learning. They read a variety of books and discuss interesting questions. They relish challenges in mathematics. Pupils understand and remember important things they learn. For example, older pupils explain the importance of the ozone layer. Younger pupils compare arid and semi-arid climates. Pupils say that when they don't understand, teachers explain in another way so that they 'get it'.

Pupils are happy and behave well. Classrooms are calm and pupils are keen to succeed. Pupils are responsible play leaders and proud members of the pupil parliament. They receive awards, such as being a 'rockstar' for staying 'green' and doing their best. They say that bullying rarely happens. They trust adults to help them resolve issues fairly. Pupils appreciate opportunities such as sports tournaments and performing at concerts.

Parents and carers appreciate this community-centred school. They say that their children feel safe and learn a lot. Opportunities to promote pupils' emotional and physical well-being are well considered. Pupils say that leaders consider their views.

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

Leaders have put in place a well-structured and sequenced curriculum. The trust has supported leaders well to set out clear guidance on what should be taught in all subjects over time. They have woven through opportunities for pupils to investigate and think about what they learn. Pupils use precise vocabulary to explain their ideas. Teachers encourage them to 'say it better'. Teachers regularly revisit and check what pupils remember and understand. This enables them to plan the next steps and identify any extra support that pupils may need.

All leaders and staff strive to give every pupil a good education. New curriculum leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subjects. However, they do not yet have the necessary skills to ensure that colleagues implement the curriculum consistently well in all classes.

Leaders make sure that reading is at the centre of the curriculum. They make sure that phonics is taught well from the start of Reception. Pupils are given books that match their reading abilities. Leaders ensure that high-quality books are selected to match interesting topics across the curriculum. They make sure that pupils understand the complex language in the books that they read. Teachers read to pupils every day to nurture a love of reading and to extend pupils' vocabulary. Pupils talk thoughtfully about the books they read and listen to.

Leaders have put in place a well-considered mathematics curriculum. Teachers enable pupils to build their knowledge of mathematics step by step. They explain new learning clearly. They check that pupils understand. Pupils regularly practise arithmetic. They complete calculations quickly and accurately. Pupils use their knowledge of arithmetic daily to solve increasingly complex problems. Pupils enjoy mathematics because they feel successful.

Leaders quickly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers and teaching assistants provide sensitive support. However, leaders have not ensured that interventions focus sufficiently on the knowledge that pupils are missing so that they can fill these gaps. Pupils do not routinely revisit the most important knowledge so that they fully understand what they are learning.

Staff make sure that children are safe and happy in the early years. Children settle well and learn the routines of school life. They enjoy the interesting activities on offer. Adults support children to learn and use new words through activities. Leaders think about how learning in Reception connects with learning that pupils will encounter in the future. This sets children up well to succeed in Year 1 and beyond.

Leaders want to give pupils valuable experiences. For example, pupils enjoy meeting inspiring people and performing with artists and other schools. Pupils are encouraged to develop their talents. Leaders prioritise pupils' mental and physical well-being. Pupils celebrate showing courage and ambition to achieve their goals. They understand the importance of being respectful, including of different beliefs and lifestyles. They learn useful strategies to help them work through difficult issues.

School and trust leaders work together to grow their staff as well as their pupils. Many staff have progressed and taken on more responsibility. Staff value working with colleagues across the trust. They value the training and opportunities they receive.

Staff feel part of a valued team and leaders are considerate of their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders put pupils' welfare first. Staff receive regular training. They are alert to and share even the smallest of concerns with leaders. Leaders have a clear oversight of pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They know pupils well.

Leaders seek advice from other agencies. They are persistent to secure the support that pupils and families need.

Pupils say that they trust adults in school to listen and help with any worries. Pupils learn about respectful relationships and personal space. In addition, older pupils learn about peer pressure and consent. Pupils are alert to the risks and benefits of the online world.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils who need extra help receive sensitive support. Leaders ensure that gaps in knowledge are quickly identified. Leaders do not ensure this information is used precisely enough so that planned adaptations and interventions focus sharply on the gaps in knowledge or barriers to learning that these pupils may have. As a result, pupils with SEND do not catch up as quickly as they could. Leaders should ensure that pupils with SEND receive the right opportunities to access learning and fill any gaps they may have, so they can achieve more.
- New leaders have expertise in the foundation subjects they are responsible for. However, they do not yet support other staff to consistently improve the implementation of the curriculum in their subject. This means in some classes, teachers are not enabling pupils to achieve as well as they could in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that teachers improve the implementation of the curriculum, so pupils achieve consistently well across all classes.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2016.

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	139805
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10211633
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	329
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Ross
Principal	Tracey Hudson
Website	www.rockinghamprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 December 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in the leadership team. This includes a new principal and two new assistant headteachers.
- The school is part of The David Ross Education Trust, a national multi-academy trust with 22 primary schools, 10 secondary schools, one special school and one all-through academy school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the principal, the assistant headteachers and other leaders. A meeting was held with representatives from The David Ross Education Trust and of the school's local governing body.

- The inspector considered a range of documents, including school policies.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. This included meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with teachers. The inspector listened to pupils reading to adults, considered curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at curriculum plans, scrutinised samples of pupils' work and spoke to leaders about other subjects, including science.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils. The inspector visited the lunch hall and playground. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school was considered.
- The single central record was scrutinised as part of the inspection of safeguarding. The inspector met with safeguarding leaders, spoke with a range of staff and pupils and considered safeguarding records.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Also, consideration was given to the 43 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the 43 responses to the free-text facility. The inspector also took into account 12 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 25 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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