

Inspection of Forestdale Primary School

Pixton Way, Croydon, Surrey CR0 9JE

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 May 2022

Outcome

Forestdale Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school. They said that they find their learning enjoyable and stimulating. Pupils are eager to participate in discussions in lessons. They are also kind, polite and courteous. Pupils get along well with each other. They trust the adults to look after them. Staff ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Adults aim to help pupils follow the school's values of being successful, thoughtful, aspirational, respectful and supportive. Pupils strive to meet adults' high expectations of them, for instance in reading and mathematics.

In rare cases where bullying occurs, adults deal with it promptly and effectively. Older pupils show caring attitudes towards their younger peers.

Leaders and staff encourage pupils to become confident leaders. Pupils were keen to explain how they have influenced some of the leaders' decisions about school life. For example, leaders acted on the school council's suggestions for constructing a peace garden, a wilderness area and an outdoor gym.

Leaders and staff work well with parents and carers, providing them with useful information on how to support their children at home. Parents appreciate that leaders are approachable. They are particularly grateful for the work leaders have done to support pupils and their families during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

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

In some subjects, the school's curriculum is well thought out and carefully ordered. For example, in mathematics, leaders have designed a curriculum which consistently builds on pupils' prior learning. Right from the start of early years, children develop a strong understanding of numbers. This gives them a solid foundation for further learning in this subject. Teachers know how to check if pupils are learning the curriculum. Their checks are regular and helpful. Pupils participate eagerly in lessons, and they talk confidently about the knowledge they have been learning.

In some subjects, however, leaders' curriculum thinking is still developing. In geography, for example, it is unclear what important knowledge leaders want pupils to know and remember in each year group. Leaders have not considered how pupils' understanding should build up over time. As a result, pupils are not achieving as highly as they could in these subjects.

Teachers use assessment well to check on what pupils know and can do. In history, for example, they have identified areas of learning which pupils missed due to the COVID-19 disruptions. Leaders and staff have prioritised these areas and adapted the curriculum so that gaps in understanding have been addressed. Similarly in the early years, teachers identified that some children were not as far forward with their language development. Staff have received training so that they can support these children to catch up swiftly.

Leaders prioritise reading. Their goal is for all pupils to be able to read fluently by the end of Year 2. They have put in place an ambitious phonics programme and trained all staff on how to deliver it. Adults teach phonics effectively. They focus on making sure that pupils know and remember their letter sounds. As a result, most pupils quickly become secure in their phonics knowledge. A small number of pupils find it hard to keep up with the phonics programme in Years 1 and 2. Overall, these pupils are supported to catch up and secure their phonics knowledge. That said, in a few instances, some pupils do not benefit from precisely targeted practice in the sounds that they need to learn and revisit. This is a barrier to strengthening these pupils' reading fluency further.

Across the school, there is a genuine love of reading amongst pupils and adults alike. Pupils hear adults read to them every day. Choosing books from their book corners or from their library is something pupils get excited about.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified at the earliest opportunity. Leaders work with feeder nursery settings to ensure a smooth transition to school. As soon as children start in Reception, teachers find out more about each child's individual needs. Well-planned support continues throughout the school. Teachers anticipate aspects of learning where they think pupils with SEND may encounter difficulties. They plan and provide targeted help, for instance before lessons. This helps to prepare these pupils for learning new ideas and concepts. As a result, pupils can learn the full curriculum.

Pupils are excited by the many opportunities for them to follow their interests outside of the subjects they learn in class. There are a wide range of after-school clubs they can choose from, which are popular. They also take part in several lunchtime clubs on offer during the school day. Pupils enjoy learning in a wide range of subjects. They like helping each other, for example by sharing equipment with their classmates. Disruptions in lessons are rare.

Staff said that they are supported by leaders to ensure their workload remains manageable. They appreciate that leaders ensure they are given sufficient time to finish tasks during the school day. Those who have extra responsibilities said that leaders are generous in providing them with sufficient time to fulfill their roles.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training and updates on how to keep pupils safe. They know their pupils and families well. Staff are vigilant and prompt at passing on concerns, which leaders act on immediately. Leaders and staff work well with external agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils who are at risk. Leaders and governors make sure that checks on the suitability of staff are rigorous.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe at home, at school or when online. The curriculum includes learning about internet safety, safe use of mobile devices, and the importance of privacy and consent, for instance.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In key stage 1, a few pupils find it hard to learn to read with fluency and confidence. While these pupils are supported, some of this support is not targeted sharply at building up reading fluency and confidence. Leaders should ensure that teachers give these pupils frequent, well-targeted practice to enable them to read fluently and confidently.
- In some subjects, the curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced. In these subjects, the significant knowledge leaders want pupils to know and remember is not clearly identified. However, it is clear from leaders' actions, for example their work to review the curriculum, that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders need to continue with and complete their review of the curriculum in all subjects within their identified timescale. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012.

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	101773
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10211177
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dennis Simmonds
Headteacher	Vivienne Esparon
Website	www.forestdale.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provider.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, he spoke with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.
- In inspecting safeguarding, the inspector carried out a scrutiny of the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and other records. The inspector also

considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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