

# Inspection of a good school: Rodborough

Rake Lane, Milford, Godalming, Surrey GU8 5BZ

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

## **Outcome**

Rodborough continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Rodborough is a friendly school with a feeling of community. Everyone lives the school's values: inspire, challenge, lead. Pupils are happy and feel safe. Adults take the time to get to know pupils well. Around the buildings, pupils enjoy positive relationships with one another and have fun during social times. For example, they like using the rain shelter which they designed themselves and raised the money to build.

Pupils are polite and courteous. Most behave well and concentrate hard on their work. In the main, pupils are confident to report any concerns about harmful behaviour, including bullying, because staff help to resolve such issues.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are equally ambitious for pupils who attend the on-site specially resourced provision for pupils with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (specially resourced provision). Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum and achieve well overall.

Pupils enjoy a plethora of clubs such as sports, music, gardening and cookery. Many activities are now starting up again due to the impact of COVID-19. Pupils are excited about their upcoming school show, Forbidden Planet, and trips abroad, such as to Berlin. They learn to become well-rounded citizens through a well-structured personal, social and health education programme. For example, pupils learn about the importance of respect for diversity.

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

Leaders have ensured that pupils benefit from a suitably ambitious curriculum. Pupils in key stage 3 study a broad range of subjects, giving them a firm foundation in knowledge and skills. Older pupils can choose from a wide menu of GCSE subjects, including some vocational off-site programmes, such as construction. A high proportion of pupils study the suite of subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate.

Most subject leaders have thought hard about what they want pupils to learn, and in what order. Pupils build on what they already know. For example, in a Year 11 English class,

pupils used their wider understanding of the writer they were studying to make links with Darwinism. In a German class, pupils used their knowledge of word structure to work out the meaning of some unfamiliar words. This helps pupils to build their knowledge of the curriculum and achieve well.

In most cases, teachers have very strong subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In many lessons, such as in English and languages, teachers encourage pupils to use subject-specific vocabulary and check pupils' understanding of new words and concepts. However, in some lessons, teachers do not check carefully enough that pupils have grasped key knowledge and skills before moving on.

In lessons inspectors visited, pupils were attentive and well behaved. However, some pupils, parents and staff told inspectors that a few lessons, especially in key stage 3, are sometimes disrupted by the low-level misbehaviour of a small number of pupils. Some pupils feel that these incidents are not always well handled by teachers.

Pupils with SEND are very well supported both academically and socially. The special educational needs coordinator provides staff with detailed information so that they can adapt learning for pupils with SEND appropriately. Pupils benefit from the excellent resources in 'The Cullum Centre', including the garden, which is a calm oasis. Leaders support pupils who attend the specially resourced provision very effectively to build their independence. This support helps these pupils to access lessons in the main school and join in confidently with many aspects of wider school life.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. Pupils' reading needs are carefully identified and specially trained staff support those who need additional help. Pupils enjoy curling up with a book in the well-resourced library.

Leaders provide pupils with appropriate advice to enable them to make informed decisions about the next stage of their education, employment or training. Leaders are in the process of strengthening careers provision for younger pupils.

Staff value leaders' consideration of their well-being, professional development and workload. Governors are loyal and committed to improving the school still further. Staff from the multi-academy trust liaise closely with school leaders, offering support and challenge in equal measure.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. They have a clear understanding of risks. For example, they learn about healthy relationships and how to stay safe online.

If staff have concerns about a pupil, they understand what they must do and the procedures to follow. All staff and governors receive regular training. Governors' oversight of safeguarding is effective. Pupils know who to go to if they have a concern. The safeguarding team quickly identifies whether pupils require additional help from external

agencies and work closely with them to ensure that pupils and families get the help that they need in a timely way.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Implementation of the curriculum is not consistently strong across the school. While subject leaders have a clear idea about what they want pupils to learn, and in what order, sometimes, teachers do not check that pupils have grasped key knowledge and skills before moving on. Leaders should ensure that assessment strategies are embedded securely and consistently across the school.
- While inspectors only saw positive behaviour in lessons visited, a number of pupils, parents and staff expressed concern over low-level disruption in some classes, particularly in key stage 3. Leaders should ensure that the behaviour policy is consistently applied across the school.

## **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 June 2013.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137019
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200487
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	883
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ralph Johnson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Armstrong-Harris
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rodborough.surrey.sch.uk">www.rodborough.surrey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Rodborough is smaller than the average-size 11 to 16 mixed school.
- The school joined the Weydon Multi-Academy Trust in March 2021.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for up to 20 pupils with SEND. Pupils who attend this provision also access lessons in the main school. The primary need for pupils who attend the provision is autism spectrum disorder.
- The school supports alternative provision for approximately 40 pupils at three registered education providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff, pupils, the chair of the governing body and three other governors, the chair of trustees and the chief executive of the trust. An inspector had a telephone call with a member of staff at an alternative provider.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. They also viewed the school's website and policies. They looked at records related to safeguarding, including checks on adults working at the school.
- Inspectors spoke to staff, including early career teachers, about behaviour and their workload in school.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils and staff through the responses to Ofsted's confidential surveys. The views of parents were considered through the 230 parent responses to Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

Paula Sargent, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Richard Carlyle

Ofsted Inspector

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