

Inspection of Roman Road Primary School

Leam Lane Estate, Felling, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE10 8SA

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

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

Roman Road Primary School was last inspected six 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 the 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?

Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that safeguarding is effective. The welfare of long-term absentees is unknown. Referrals to children's social care, for example about possible child sexual exploitation, are not made in a timely manner. Some behaviour records on the school's management information system are incomplete.

Most pupils behave well at Roman Road Primary School. A few pupils' poor behaviour, including bullying, disrupts the education of others. As a result, some pupils do not feel as happy, safe and secure as they should in school. Leaders have not implemented relationships education in a timely manner. Older pupils have not learned about healthy and unhealthy relationships, and unacceptable peer-on-peer harassment. As a result, these pupils are ill-equipped to identify, report and deal with unhealthy relationships.

Leaders acknowledge the importance of each and every child learning to read. The school's chosen phonics scheme is delivered consistently well. Gaps in pupils' knowledge caused during the COVID-19 pandemic are closing rapidly. At Roman Road, pupils enjoy reading. The content of the curriculum in some other subjects is not as well developed as it is in phonics.

Children in the early years love coming to school. They enjoy learning and playing with their friends. Staff make learning fun. Routines are established early. Adults encourage the development of children's communication, language and literacy by talking with the children, asking them questions and listening to their answers attentively. Children look forward to 'Wild Wednesdays' when they learn in the school's nature area.

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

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum does not address risk-taking behaviour sufficiently. Recently, an external provider gave talks about online safety to Years 5 and 6. Off-line grooming and the risk of criminal exploitation has not been explored to a similar extent. There is a reliance on ad hoc reactive lessons and assemblies to teach PSHE. This means important areas of learning, including about protected characteristics, are missed. Relationship education is not taught to the extent that it should be at key stage 2.

Most pupils behave well in school. A few pupils have aggressive outbursts. Leaders have not ensured that staff are up to date with positive handling techniques. This puts staff and pupils at risk. Behaviour plans for individual pupils make use of long-term therapy and counselling. However, in a few cases, there is an over-reliance on the headteacher being available to de-escalate behaviour. Sometimes, individual pupils are with the headteacher several times in one day, returning to class in between. They miss out on key learning in class.

The effectiveness of behaviour strategies cannot be checked as the school's records are incomplete. Leaders cannot accurately analyse whole school or individual pupil's behaviours patterns. Governors do not have full knowledge of the trends in behaviour incidents over time. They are unable to fulfil their support and challenge role effectively.

Senior leaders prioritise the teaching of basic skills, such as reading and mathematics, across the school. There is highly consistent teaching of a well-structured phonics scheme. Staff share the same high expectations of all pupils in reading. In both mathematics and phonics, pupils enjoy their learning and remember what they have been taught. The curriculum is adapted to ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) work alongside their peers. The subject leaders are passionate, competent and guide other members of staff in what to teach and when. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is checked in lessons and more formally on a regular basis. Pupils with gaps in their knowledge receive catch-up lessons.

Curriculum ambition, sequence and structure is variable in subjects beyond phonics and mathematics. In science, geography and history, pupils are not connecting their learning so that they remember more over time. Art is one of the stronger subjects. The curriculum leader suggests the artists to study from diverse backgrounds with different styles of work. This inspires pupils to think more broadly about the world. She also provides ideas on techniques and the resources that could be used. However, the quality of artwork produced by younger pupils is sometimes better than that in older classes. Leaders are planning a more tightly focused curriculum for art and other subjects such as science, geography and history. They intend that it will be structured in small steps so that pupils can gradually build up their knowledge and skills.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs, including gardening, robotics, karate and choir. All pupils take part in dramatic productions such as 'Peter Pan' and 'Matilda'.

Younger pupils are particularly keen to please their teachers. They concentrate well on their learning. Children in early years remember their learning well. The curriculum is carefully designed to meet their needs. Staff constantly model the rich language they expect children to know. They regularly check the children's understanding and revisit learning basic skills. Stories are used to good effect to introduce children to new learning. This includes a wide range of texts to help children understand that people come from different backgrounds and families. Children are taught to be respectful of each other and they are.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that school is a consistently safe environment for all pupils. Leaders, teachers and support staff do not react to concerns about pupils' behaviour in school and in the wider community well. Senior leaders are aware of the risk of child sexual exploitation in the locality but have failed to prioritise this aspect of the curriculum. This potentially leaves pupils at a greater risk of harm.

Leaders do not ensure that safeguarding and behaviour incidents, and the ensuing actions taken by the school, are recorded in the school's management information system as a matter of course. This means that leaders do not have sufficient oversight of the impact of their work to modify behaviour.

Some staff do not understand the routes for making referrals to children's social care. Many believe the route taken for pastoral and/or academic support is a child protection referral. Leaders do not know how to follow up and challenge the decisions made by children's social care appropriately.

The welfare of pupils, including the most vulnerable, is not checked regularly when they are absent from school for lengthy periods of time. Leaders rely on local knowledge and asking parents about their child's well-being. Leaders have insufficient focus on potential safeguarding risks. Leaders are over-reliant on other services to check up on the welfare of pupils who are frequently absent.

Older pupils do not have an age-appropriate understanding of personal space and respect for one another's bodies. Pupils reported incidents of inappropriately touching, pinching, kicking, slapping, punching and holding in a headlock to members of the inspection team. Pupils also reported sexualised behaviours which are not recorded in the school's management information system. Leaders are aware of one or two incidents. They took action to stop this behaviour. Their actions have not been effective.

Some pupils do not tell staff about the behaviour of other pupils for fear of retaliation. Some staff spoken to understood why pupils are scared to report incidents to them. Leaders do not know the true extent of concerning behaviour. They cannot take the steps needed to keep pupils safe.

Governors do not have an accurate view of safeguarding and behaviour issues in the school. Governors know about practical issues, such as building security, but are unable to articulate how the wider culture of safeguarding is developed at Roman Road. They do not receive detailed behaviour and safeguarding analyses about trends over time. Governors do not monitor the actions that leaders take to safeguard pupils in a sufficiently robust way.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Safeguarding is not effective. Pupils are potentially at risk of harm, abuse and neglect. Leaders must ensure that all safeguarding, together with the actions taken to address the incidents, are recorded in the school's management information system. Leaders must ensure that they report child protection incidents to the appropriate authorities in a timely manner. Leaders must ensure that all staff are trained in wider safeguarding issues, including child sexual and criminal exploitation and county lines. Leaders must ensure all staff understand that safeguarding issues, such as radicalisation, could affect their pupils.
- Some pupils do not report incidents of poor behaviour. These pupils do not get the support or help that they need in a timely manner. Leaders must ensure that pupils report such concerns, and any necessary actions are taken immediately.
- The PHSE curriculum is not fully developed. Some older pupils have little knowledge about relationships, off-line risk-taking behaviours (including sexualised behaviours) and the protected characteristics. Leaders must ensure the curriculum for PHSE is developed fully and that staff are trained to deliver the content of the curriculum confidently.
- In some subjects of the wider curriculum beyond mathematics and phonics, the precise knowledge that pupils need to know in key stage 2 does not build on from the pupils' previous learning in key stage 1 and the early years. This leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should complete their plans to revisit these curriculum areas to ensure that knowledge and skills are sequenced carefully and that no gaps in curriculum coverage remain.

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	108376
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10227106
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	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gary Carr
Headteacher	Carole Jones
Website	romanroadprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	29 and 30 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use an alternative provision.
- There has been a new headteacher since the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average.
- The number of pupils with SEND is well above the national average.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, early years leader and special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, art and geography. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation for history, design technology and science.
- The lead inspector met representatives of the local governing body, including the vice-chair. She also met with the local authority education advisor who supports the school.
- Responses to the pupil, parent and staff surveys were also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Mary Cook, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Katie Spurr

Her Majesty's Inspector

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