

Inspection of a good school: Rode Heath Primary School

Heath Avenue, Rode Heath, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST7 3RY

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2022

Outcome

Rode Heath Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Rode Heath Primary School are proud of their school and love learning. They enter in the morning with a smile on their faces. One parent summed up the views of many when they said, 'We have a child that is excited and enthusiastic to go to school and this is invaluable.'

Leaders have a clear vision for the school. They have high expectations of every pupil. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), live up to leaders' high expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils progress very well through a carefully designed curriculum. They are very well prepared for the next stages of their education.

Leaders expect pupils to behave extremely well at all times. Pupils feel safe in school. If bullying happens, staff act quickly and effectively to stop it. The values of curiosity, fairness, teamwork and resilience encourage pupils to make the right choices in what they say and do. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and around the school.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities that broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs from sports and choir to computing.

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

Leaders are highly aspirational for all pupils. They have designed an ambitious curriculum that is exciting and rich in opportunities. In each subject, leaders have carefully ordered the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. Over time, pupils revisit these, building a rich body of subject knowledge that they can use and apply in their learning.

Teachers are well trained and knowledgeable. They have a strong understanding of the subjects that they teach. Teachers explain new ideas clearly, check pupils' understanding, spot misconceptions and then correct them. They provide extra help for pupils who are not learning new subject content as quickly as their peers. For example, in mathematics, teachers provide precise explanations and break new information down into small steps, often using practical resources.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils love to read regularly at school and at home. Staff immerse children in stories and rhymes as soon as they start in the early years. Children in the Reception class quickly learn the sounds that letters represent through daily phonics sessions. Staff are quick to spot any pupils who need extra help to keep up. These pupils receive effective support so that they can keep pace with their classmates. Older pupils talked about their favourite books and authors with understanding and pleasure. From early years through to Year 6, pupils' enthusiasm for reading shines through.

In the early years, staff ensure that children can learn the curriculum through activities that develop their enquiring minds and help them to practise their learning. This continues as pupils move through the school. Staff encourage pupils to be independent thinkers. This is particularly evident in the impressive science, technology, engineering and mathematics work that pupils complete. In all subjects, pupils are proud to show the work in their books and talk about their learning over time.

Leaders and staff work together to identify any pupils who may have SEND. These pupils receive timely support to enable them to access the curriculum. This ensures that pupils with SEND experience the curriculum in line with their peers and achieve well.

Pupils' personal development threads through all their learning in school. Leaders have carefully mapped out the personal, social, health and economic curriculum and ensured that they regularly revisit key elements. There are a wide range of activities within the curriculum which enrich and deepen pupils' learning. Pupils can make a positive contribution to their school community by becoming school councillors, house captains and reading buddies. These roles are valued highly. Pupils are knowledgeable and form balanced and considered opinions. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders have created a purposeful environment where pupils and staff are keen to learn. All staff are passionate about ensuring that every child and pupil has the best possible chance to enjoy school and achieve well. Staff said that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. Governors have very high expectations of leaders and check on their work robustly. The success of every pupil is important to them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take their responsibilities to safeguard pupils seriously. They have a comprehensive knowledge of each individual pupil. Leaders keep detailed records that are

analysed frequently. They respond decisively to concerns. Leaders are persistent in their approach to getting the right help for pupils.

Staff know the pupils well. They receive regular training to understand the risks and potential dangers that pupils may face. Clear processes are in place so that staff can report concerns.

Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe online, in school and in the local community.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

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.

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	111159
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10226331
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	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Harris
Headteacher	Carl Leech
Website	www.rodeheath.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 and 17 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act.

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative providers.
- Leaders run a breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils.

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 meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. The inspector met subject leaders for these subjects and undertook joint visits to lessons. The inspector also talked to pupils and teachers, looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read.

- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed lunchtime.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Emma Gater, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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