

# Inspection of Robertswood School

Denham Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 0EW

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Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils enjoy learning in this caring and inclusive school. They appreciate how the adults help them to become the very best version of themselves. As one pupil explained, 'We learn how to choose the right path in life.' Leaders and staff expect pupils to behave well, concentrate in lessons and try their hardest. Pupils rise to these high expectations and so they learn well.

The school's 'star values' underpin the positive and respectful culture. Younger children learn to work and play together cooperatively. Pupils feel safe in school. When there are disagreements, pupils know that adults will help them to understand their differences and sort out any problems. Incidents of bullying are rare.

Pupils are proud of their positions of responsibility and the impact they have. Examples include the school council fundraising for improvements to the climbing wall, house captains supporting others at playtime and the enthusiastic eco-warriors helping the school become more environmentally friendly.

Leaders encourage pupils to develop their interests and talents. They provide a wide range of clubs, visits, visitors and special events which pupils, parents and carers appreciate. Leaders understand that school attendance and the support for pupils who struggle to learn to read must improve quickly.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is challenging and caters for the needs of all pupils at the school. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. On the whole, the curriculum is well sequenced and broken down into the small steps that build towards the important knowledge leaders want pupils to learn. Teachers explain things well and 'hook' pupils into learning. They rightly focus on building vocabulary across all subjects, making links when appropriate. Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to the full curriculum offer. Leaders identify additional needs early and work closely with other professionals to provide adaptations and extra support when necessary.

In early years, leaders have considered each area of learning and how children progress from entry into Nursery to the end of Reception. However, some curriculum thinking here lacks detail about the knowledge and skills that children are intended to build during this time. The learning environment both inside and outside is vibrant and inviting. It is a place where children thrive, with purposeful activity and positive relationships. Right from the start, children develop vital skills for learning, such as curiosity and resilience. Staff teach children to regulate their emotions, take turns with equipment and settle into school routines.

All staff implement the school behaviour policy consistently and fairly. Pupils who find it hard to make the right behaviour choices get the help that they need to learn from these events and secure success.

Pupils develop a love of reading and teachers ensure that reading books match the sounds they are learning. Across the curriculum, leaders choose books that stretch and broaden pupils' understanding. Pupils' reading comprehension skills are well taught and teachers check learning regularly. They use this information to target support well to each pupil's needs. Leaders' ambition is for every pupil to learn to read fluently. In Nursery, children learn that letters make sounds. Teachers in Reception then build upon this further, closely following the early reading programme. However, pupils in key stage 1 and 2 who are struggling to learn to read are not provided with the targeted support that they need to catch up quickly with their peers. Not all staff are confident in providing the phonic teaching required.

There is a strong focus on pupils' personal development. The school's skills-building programme equips pupils with the tools that they need to work together, think creatively and solve problems. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Through the school's well-planned curriculum for pupils' personal, social, health and economic education, pupils learn how to keep safe, including online. They learn that others may not share their opinions and to respect difference, while knowing how to challenge inequality. Leaders emphasise the importance of healthy relationships, minds and bodies. They provide pupils with additional pastoral care when required.

Governors know the school well. They have a clear understanding of its strengths and priorities for improvement. However, some aspects of their improvement work are not precise enough, meaning that governors do not hold leaders to account for their work effectively. Other aspects have not yet had the required impact. For example, attendance remains too low for some pupils. Staff are proud to work at this school and feel motivated and valued as part of a tight knit team. They are confident and appreciate that their workload and well-being matter to leaders. Parents are exceptionally positive and supportive. They unanimously agreed they would recommend this school to others.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have secured a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are well trained to recognise signs of harm in children. They report any concerns promptly and leaders meticulously follow these up. Leaders and staff get to know their pupils and families very well. Leaders work effectively with other professionals to reduce harm to vulnerable pupils. They are persistent in securing the help they need quickly. Leaders worked swiftly to address minor weaknesses found in the recording of some information. Leaders ensure that checks on adults appointed to work in the school are thorough and monitored effectively.

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

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

- The approach to teaching phonics is not consistently effective. Some staff lack expertise in ensuring all pupils make secure progress and in knowing how to support the weakest readers to catch up quickly. Leaders need to make sure that all staff have the knowledge and confidence to deliver the chosen phonics programme effectively.
- Some activities for children in Nursery and Reception Years do not build carefully enough on what children know or can do. Consequently, some children in the early years do not secure recently learned knowledge. Leaders need greater clarity of thinking about their intended curriculum and how to implement it, ensuring that staff understand how activities build over time and can check what children know and can do.
- Some aspects of leadership lack strong, shared policies and practice. This means that in areas such as improving school attendance, leaders do not achieve their high ambitions. Leaders should become more systematic in their approach, learning from best practice and ensuring staff follow agreed procedures diligently.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110360
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10228014
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	394
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sally Parkin and Carys Moore-Saxton (co-chairs)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Edward Richings
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.robertswoodschool.co.uk">www.robertswoodschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school care club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with three governors, including the co-chairs of governors. He also held a separate meeting with a representative from Buckinghamshire local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including the school's record of recruitment checks. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, and parents' written comments. An inspector also spoke to groups of parents on the morning of the first day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Alan Derry, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Shaughnessy	Ofsted Inspector
Ed Mather	His Majesty's Inspector

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