

Inspection of a good school: Rowsley CofE (Controlled) Primary School

Woodhouse Road, Rowsley, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2ED

Inspection date:

16 November 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and feel happy and safe. One child said: 'This is an inclusive school. Everyone has a chance to do everything.' Inspectors agree. Leaders know the families well. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. One parent wrote, 'It is a truly wonderful school that my child looks forward to attending every day.' This comment was typical of parents' views.

Pupils behave well most of the time. They cooperate well with each other and relationships with adults are very positive. Pupils said that bullying is rare. They said that if they did have concerns, they would tell an adult. Pupils were confident that adults would resolve any problems.

Leaders plan a range of visits to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils have visited Chatsworth House to view artistic sculptures. Pupils enjoy the residential visits to Edale. They participate in outdoor activities, for example orienteering. Pupils take part in services at St Katherine's Church. These opportunities promote pupils' personal and spiritual development well.

The curriculum is not consistently well planned across the school to enable pupils to build their knowledge in some subjects. Leaders recognise that they are not checking whether pupils are remembering key knowledge well enough.

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

Leaders have worked hard to lead the school through some turbulent times. Since the previous inspection, the school had to temporarily move premises following flooding. In addition, there was disruption to learning due to the pandemic as well as staff absence. Parents have praised how leaders and staff have supported pupils through these

challenging times. The school is a harmonious community. All staff know all the children well. Leaders believe that the disruption has slowed the development of the curriculum. This is a priority on the school improvement plan.

Pupils are very happy at the school. All staff promote pupils' character well. Pupils strive to achieve bronze, silver and gold star badges. These recognise personal qualities, such as being a good friend and showing initiative. Pupils participate in a wide range of sporting competitions and festivals. At breaktime, pupils played hockey in a safe and competitive spirit. Behaviour around school is good. However, there are occasions when younger pupils misbehave as they move from one activity to another, and learning time is lost.

Leaders are passionate about reading. They promote a love of reading very well. Pupils enjoy reading. The reading leader has designed reading challenges to deepen pupils' understanding of texts. Pupils enjoy completing these challenges and, as a result, read more. Adults have been trained to teach the school's phonics programme. However, there are occasions when pupils do not engage as well as they should in phonics lessons. This slows their progress. Furthermore, teachers do not consistently check that pupils write their letters correctly, which also slows pupils' progress.

The reading books for younger pupils do not match the sounds they know well enough. Pupils struggle to read accurately and fluently, despite trying hard. Adults do not consistently support pupils to read fluently. Pupils are not routinely asked to re-read sentences more fluently.

Pupils enjoy mathematics. The mathematics curriculum is planned well. The content of lessons is carefully sequenced. This helps pupils build their knowledge and deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts. Teachers check pupils' progress. They ask questions to check pupils have remembered previous learning. Pupils achieve well in mathematics.

The curriculum for some subjects is not planned well enough. Leaders have ambitious aims for pupils to achieve well. However, the planning of the curriculum varies in quality. It is not clear how all pupils will achieve the curriculum goals. Leaders have not checked how learning is planned across all subjects to ensure it will help pupils know more and remember more. As a result, some pupils cannot remember key knowledge that they have been taught. Where learning is planned and taught well, pupils remember key knowledge. In Years 5 and 6, pupils could remember Ordnance Survey map symbols. They used this knowledge successfully to orienteer in the forest.

Pupils complete activities to check what they have learned in some subjects. However, these activities do not consistently check whether pupils have remembered key knowledge. Consequently, leaders are not aware of gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Adults support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities very well. Learning is tailored precisely to meet their needs. Excellent relationships between pupils and adults ensure that pupils make progress.

Leaders are proactive in ensuring teachers' workload is manageable. Staff appreciate leaders' actions to promote their well-being. Staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors monitor safeguarding effectively. They carry out a detailed audit of all matters related to safeguarding. Governors surveyed children about their use of the internet. The findings were presented to parents. Leaders provide guidance to help keep children safe online. Pupils can put any concerns in a 'monster worry box'. Pupils said teachers resolve concerns.

Leaders work closely with a range of services to meet the needs of pupils and families. Leaders take prompt action on any concerns raised. Staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. The recruitment checks on adults who work in school have been completed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have introduced a new phonics scheme, which is being taught consistently through the school. However, there are occasions when pupils are not engaging fully in lessons and therefore not making as much progress as they could. Too many reading books do not match the sounds that pupils know. Therefore, pupils are not developing into fluent readers. Adults should ensure that reading books match the sounds pupils know more closely to support pupils' reading fluency. Furthermore, adults should provide more occasions for pupils to hear how sentences can be read fluently. They should ask pupils to re-read some sentences to help them become more fluent. Finally, correct letter formation should be consistently encouraged to support pupils' writing.
- The checks that teachers make in many subjects do not consistently assess the key knowledge that they want pupils to remember. Therefore, teachers are not identifying potential gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders must ensure that checks focus on the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Any gaps in pupils' knowledge should be identified and addressed.
- The sequencing of learning in some subjects is not clear enough for all year groups. Leaders have not checked closely whether teachers are sequencing learning well enough to meet the school's curriculum aims. Learning should be well sequenced to help pupils build their knowledge over time.

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 June 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	112820
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10240884
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Adrian Thornhill
Headteacher	Alexia Wyr
Website	www.rowsleyprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has federated with another primary school since the last inspection. The two schools share a governing body and an executive headteacher.
- The executive headteacher was appointed since the last inspection.
- The school uses one alternative provider.
- The governing body manages a breakfast club and an after-school club.

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.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher and a range of staff. The lead inspector met with five governors. An inspector met with parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors reviewed surveys completed by pupils, parents and staff.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and reviewed curriculum documentation.
- The lead inspector held a telephone call with the school's local authority adviser.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding through discussion with leaders, governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors reviewed documentation related to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julian Scholefield

Ofsted Inspector

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