

Inspection of a good school: Red Row First School

Red Row, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 5AS

Inspection date: 20 January 2023

Outcome

Red Row First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Red Row First School is a caring school where pupils are welcomed to 'come as you are and grow' as the school motto states. Some parents and carers say the school is more like a family than a school. This is because staff and pupils look after each other. Pupils feel safe, enjoy learning and achieve well.

Staff have high expectations for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn well. They are supported effectively by staff, who ensure that the curriculum meets their personal and academic needs.

Pupils are polite, respectful and kind to each other. In lessons, pupils have a 'shoulder partner' who they say is always there to help. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils enjoy talking with friends. In lessons, most pupils concentrate well on their learning. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident to report any concerns they have to staff. Staff are swift to sort out problems.

Leaders plan a wide range of additional clubs to widen pupils' experiences and nurture their talents, such as sewing, cookery and gardening. Additional activities also develop pupils' social skills. Pupils enjoy learning to play a range of sports and musical instruments. Some pupils say they enjoy visits to the local care home to sing for the residents.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND. They have considered the knowledge that pupils must gain from Nursery to Year 4. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, teachers help pupils to remember the most important knowledge. The curriculum enables pupils to deepen their knowledge of multiplication over time. This means that older pupils can apply this knowledge confidently when adding fractions together.

Teachers use suitable methods in their teaching to enable pupils to understand and recall their learning. They use specific examples to help pupils understand abstract mathematical concepts. For example, some younger pupils in Year 2 use pictures to help them add. This helps them later when they record their work in simple number sentences. Teachers also give pupils feedback, which helps them to improve their work. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, teachers use assessment well to identify gaps. As a result, pupils achieve well.

This year, leaders introduced classes with single age groups. In light of these changes, leaders have revised the curriculum. In the foundation subjects, such as geography, planned changes have not been fully implemented. On occasion, activities do not help pupils to learn what they need for their next steps in learning. Some teachers have not considered well enough the gaps pupils may have in their knowledge.

Ensuring all pupils learn to read is a priority. Children at the earliest stages of learning to read are well supported by staff. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading. Children in Reception show enthusiasm when repeating the rhymes and actions for letters and their sounds. Teachers use assessment in phonics sessions to identify pupils who need extra help. Extra sessions ensure that pupils catch up with their peers. As a result, pupils become fluent, confident readers.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read. They look forward to reading in school with volunteers, many of whom are family members. Older pupils are keen to help their peers learn to read by prompting them to use phonics to read unfamiliar words.

Staff have high expectations for pupils with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) provides teachers with the information they need to support pupils well. Teachers use this information to ensure that some pupils have equipment such as movement cushions and ear defenders. This helps pupils to concentrate in lessons. Some pupils benefit from small-group or one-to-one interventions. The support ensures that pupils access the full curriculum. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progress.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Some staff have specialist knowledge, which they use to help pupils make better choices. Pupils show high levels of respect for staff and each other.

The curriculum supports pupils' social and emotional development well. Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. Through assemblies and visits to the local church, pupils learn tolerance and respect for those who are different. Pupils enjoy baking to raise money for charity and looking after the local environment by picking litter in the school grounds. Pupils learn about democracy by serving on the school council. However, pupils do not have a strong enough knowledge about faiths and cultures that are different to their own.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported by leaders, who consider and support their workload. There is a culture of care and respect within the school. Governors check that any improvements made by leaders have a positive impact on pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. The headteacher and deputy safeguarding leader ensure that everyone who works in the school benefits from regular safeguarding training. They make sure the right external support is used to help pupils when needed. Staff know pupils and their families well. This helps them to understand pupils' wide-ranging needs very well. Staff know the systems for reporting concerns. Leaders carry out thorough recruitment checks for all who work in the school.

Pupils know about how to keep safe online and when they are out in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in the foundation subjects, such as geography, is not embedded. Pupils do not have the detailed knowledge they need to achieve well in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that important subject-specific knowledge is emphasised in the curriculum and that teachers have the precise information they need to plan sequences of lessons that help pupils to achieve what leaders intend.
- Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge about the diverse cultures that make up modern Britain. They do not know enough about a broad range of faiths and cultures, nor about how some groups of people may suffer discrimination. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures so that they are better prepared for life in modern Britain.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 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.

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	122197
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10255658
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Clark
Headteacher	Richard Bollands
Website	www.redrow.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a nursery provision for pupils from age three.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with the acting director of children's services for Northumberland County Council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: 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.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors examined the single central record and looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. Inspectors spoke to staff, governors and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- An inspector spoke with parents during the inspection. The lead inspector considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. This included any free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with staff during the inspection and considered responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors considered the views of pupils through responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and through conversations held with pupils.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emily Stevens

His Majesty's Inspector

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