

# Inspection of a good school: The Rosary Catholic Primary School

Beeches Green, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 4AB

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 March 2023

## **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 are proud to attend this inclusive, caring school. They feel safe and have positive relationships with each other and the staff. This helps to create a respectful culture. Pupils understand the school's values and strive to help each other, as well as make a real difference to their community. Older pupils are honoured to take on leadership roles, such as being a well-being ambassador. They enjoy and benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular clubs such as choir, tag rugby, forest school and yoga. Pupils value the many trips and curriculum enrichments offered to strengthen their learning.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. If pupils find school life challenging, there is a team of trusted adults to ensure the right help is available. Indeed, the pastoral support for pupils and their families is a real strength. Bullying is not something that pupils worry about because they have confidence that staff will listen and act quickly.

Leaders' high expectations mean that pupils try to do their best. However, too many pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should, for example in reading. While leaders understand that the weaker readers need more support, this is not fully effective.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They have identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn, right from early years. In some subjects, such as mathematics, pupils develop knowledge in a clear sequence that builds over time. As a result, they typically achieve well in such subjects. This helps pupils to make connections between topics that help them remember. However, some subjects, such as history, are not as well developed. In these subjects, the precise knowledge to be learned is not as clear. As a result, too many pupils cannot remember or connect what they have been

taught. This lack of precision also makes it difficult for teachers to check pupils' understanding.

Leaders have high ambitions for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and precisely, making sure that they get the right support. Leaders seek guidance from specialists when needed. Despite recent staffing changes, leaders ensure there is a robust, collaborative approach that helps pupils with SEND to learn.

Leaders have put reading at the centre of pupils' learning. For example, they prioritise training so that staff can deliver the phonics programme rigorously. They also ensure that staff select books that are matched closely to the sounds that pupils know. Staff are beginning to use high-quality books as a key part of the curriculum, using texts to support some history learning in Year 6. However, if younger pupils fall behind, staff do not respond quickly with the right support. For example, weaker readers in Year 1 do not get sufficient practice or gain effective support to catch up. This means that too many pupils are not learning to read as well as they could.

Strong relationships have developed between home and school. However, leaders need to build on this partnership work to ensure that every family expects to send their child to school every day. Although there are strategies in place, they are not robust enough to improve attendance.

Pupils are excited to learn. They are enthusiastic in lessons and try to make the right choices. Sometimes pupils can lose focus because of the behaviour of a very small minority of others. Pupils respond positively to the reminders from teachers to behave well and get back to work. This creates a productive and happy atmosphere during lessons and around the school.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' personal development very well. Through assemblies and the wider curriculum, pupils learn about people different from themselves. For instance, using current affairs resources, pupils discuss issues such as social influencers. They also get to debate wider issues, such as how they can make better changes in the world themselves. Leaders have developed strong approaches to promoting mental health, which support both pupils and staff in considerate ways.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and value its leaders. Leaders engage parents in the life of the school, for instance with the successful food bank programme and coffee mornings, to strengthen relationships. Leaders take account of staff's workload and well-being in valued ways. Despite significant changes in staff and governance, there is a real sense of togetherness.

Governors know some of the school's strengths but do not have a precise understanding of the quality of education offered to all pupils. This hinders governors' ability to challenge and support leaders effectively.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed clear policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. Leaders have also trained staff so that they know the potential signs of harm. Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. Where appropriate, leaders ensure that pupils and their families get help and support when they need them. Pupils are taught effectively how to keep themselves safe when online. They develop an age-appropriate understanding of key issues, such as consent. During the inspection, leaders had to update their records of checks on staff and governors to ensure that they complied with statutory guidance.

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

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

- The school's programme to teach pupils to read is not having the impact it needs to have. Support for weaker readers, including practice and opportunities to catch up, is not strong enough or consistent. As a result, these pupils are not developing the fluency to keep up with their peers and be able to access the wider curriculum. Leaders need to consider these shortcomings as a matter of urgency.
- In some subjects, the curriculum is not fully effective. Leaders have not precisely laid out what knowledge and skills are to be learned. This sometimes leads to teachers being unclear about what key knowledge to teach or what understanding to check across a series of lessons. Leaders need to continue refining the curriculum so that it identifies the precise sequenced knowledge that pupils must know and remember.
- Leaders' work to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence has not been robust enough. Absence and persistent absence remain high. Pupils, therefore, do not benefit as well as they should from their education. Leaders must take decisive action to reduce absence and persistent absence as quickly as possible.
- Governors' strategic oversight of some aspects of the school's work is not sufficiently robust. As a result, governors do not have a strong enough understanding of important aspects of the school's work, such as quality of education. Governors need to put in place stronger systems to enable them to have a clearer understanding of the school's work so they can hold leaders to account and fulfil their strategic responsibilities more effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137410
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256752
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	183
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trustees</b>	Philip Rush
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rosy Savory
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.rosaryschool.org.uk">https://www.rosaryschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The Rosary Catholic Primary School, Stroud is currently a stand-alone academy in a single academy trust. It converted to become an academy in September 2011.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of The Rosary as a Catholic school took place in March 2017.
- The school provides wraparound care through a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.
- There are more pupils with education, health and care plans than in the average primary school.
- The school has seen some turnover in the membership of the governing body in recent years. There has also been a significant number of staff leavers and joiners.

## 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 his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the SEND manager.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair. Although governors are trustees of the academy, parents and staff know them as, and call them, governors.
- The inspector spoke with a representative from the Diocese of Clifton.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. Deep dives included visiting a range of lessons, looking at pupils' work, and talking with leaders, teachers and pupils about how teaching in these subjects builds pupils' knowledge over time. The inspector also heard pupils read to a known adult.
- A wide range of safeguarding documents, including the single central record, were checked. The inspector also reviewed the school's records for child protection and assessed the school's culture of safeguarding.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and relevant school policies.
- The inspector took account of parents' responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, along with their written comments. The inspector also talked with parents on the morning of the second day of inspection.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views about their learning, what behaviour is like at the school and whether they felt safe. The inspector also talked to pupils about their views on personal development.
- The inspector met with a range of staff to gather their views on how leaders support them. The inspector also took account of their responses to the staff survey.

## **Inspection team**

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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