

Inspection of Roberts Primary School

Robert Street, Lower Gornal, Dudley, West Midlands DY3 2AZ

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

At Roberts Primary School, pupils are polite, well-mannered and work hard. They speak knowledgeably about the school's seven learning behaviours, 'respect, cooperation, reasoning, communication, resilience, curiosity and reflectiveness'. Pupils make good use of the 'bubble thoughts box' to share their worries with adults. They know that adults care for them and trust that they will be listened to.

Pupils can explain the importance of being physically and mentally healthy. They understand what a healthy relationship looks like. They learn about the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Pupils say bullying does not happen very often. Staff deal with any disagreements, as well as bullying, swiftly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy their learning. Leaders have started to redesign the curriculum across most subjects. However, pupils do not achieve well enough in reading. Sometimes, they do not gain the knowledge they need to be able to make connections and build upon their previous learning. This means that pupils sometimes struggle to remember what they have been taught.

Daily phonics in the early years is taught well. However, this is not the case across key stage 1. Teachers have not ensured that all pupils have developed a love of reading.

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

During the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders took the opportunity to redesign the curriculum for many subjects. This included designing an ambitious and challenging early years curriculum.

Leaders have started to develop an ambitious curriculum. This is well developed in some subjects, including history and geography. In these subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge they expect pupils to know. They have mapped this out carefully. As a result, pupils achieve well in these subjects. However, in other subjects, such as reading, leaders have not identified the small steps that pupils need to take to be successful. Where this happens, pupils do not make strong progress and they struggle to remember what they have learned.

The early years is a strength of the school. Leaders have created a purposeful curriculum and have carefully ordered what they want the children to learn and remember. Teachers prioritise language development, and children enjoy listening to stories and rhymes. Children are developing a passion for reading. Through role play, children enthusiastically re-enact stories such as 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'.

Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics programme. They have made sure that all staff have received the training needed to deliver this programme well. Consequently, phonics is well taught in the early years. However, in key stage 1,

teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge quickly enough. Pupils who fall behind do not always receive the support they need to catch up. Leaders have not made sure that the books pupils read are matched well enough to the sounds they know. As a result, pupils struggle to read with fluency, confidence or understanding.

The reading curriculum is not well sequenced. Some pupils do not learn the knowledge and skills they need to become better readers. Some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not always understand the texts they are reading. This stops them from accessing the knowledge they need to make sense of their learning. This holds pupils back.

Leaders are quick to identify pupils with SEND. However, they do not make sure that all staff have the knowledge they need to understand how to best support these pupils. Consequently, some teachers do not provide work for these pupils that is well matched to their individual needs. Some teachers' expectations of what these pupils could achieve is too low. This limits the progress some pupils with SEND make.

Pupils, including those in the early years, behave well in lessons. They develop positive relationships with their peers. These respectful relationships are consistently seen in the way that pupils behave across the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and behave well in class and around the school.

Leaders ensure that there are many opportunities to enhance pupils' personal development. There are many trips and residential visits planned that help broaden pupils' life experiences and develop their talents and interests. The personal, social and health education curriculum is well planned and bespoke to the needs of the pupils. Pupils get along well with one another and develop a sound understanding of the value of respecting people of different faiths and cultures.

Leaders engage well with the staff. They have taken positive steps to improve staff's well-being and workload. Staff enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders care for all pupils and prioritise safeguarding. Staff are well trained in identifying any concerns they may have. There are clear systems in place for reporting concerns. Leaders follow these up with prompt action. Leaders work well with outside agencies. This ensures that vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate support. Leaders carry out the appropriate checks on all staff employed at the school. Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- During key stage 1 phonics sessions, adults do not identify and address the sounds pupils do not know. Therefore, some pupils struggle to read. Pupils are also given books that they find hard to read. As a result, pupils do not learn to read with good fluency and confidence. Leaders should ensure that pupils are taught the sounds that build on what they already know.
- Leaders have not yet ensured that there is a coherent and well-planned reading curriculum. Teachers do not teach pupils the right skills and knowledge needed to help them progress as well as they should. As a result, pupils do not make the gains in reading that they are capable of. This contributes to pupils' lack of enjoyment in reading when they struggle to understand the text. Leaders need to ensure that the reading curriculum is coherently planned and well sequenced.
- Those additional adults who work with pupils with SEND do not have the training they need to provide the correct level of support. This means that some of these pupils are given activities that do not support their learning. At times, some pupils are given too much help, and this limits their independence. Leaders need to ensure that staff are enabled to support pupils with SEND suitably well.

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	103821
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10256921
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	678
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Smith
Headteacher	Dawn Hunt
Website	www.robertsprimary.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has its own local governing board with delegated responsibilities.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school makes use of one registered 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also met with a wide range of other staff.

- Inspectors met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also held a conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors reviewed school policies, procedures and records. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with staff, governors, trust representatives and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in six subjects: reading, mathematics, history, geography, science and music. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and while in lessons.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers to gather their views about the school. Inspectors also spoke with staff.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Turner	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Nash	Ofsted Inspector
Devinder Riat	Ofsted Inspector

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