

Inspection of a good school: Smitham Primary School

Portnalls Road, Coulsdon, Surrey CR5 3DE

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 April 2023

Outcome

Smitham Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They feel safe and are kept safe. Pupils are respectful to one another and demonstrate the school's 'SMART' behaviours by being sensible, well-mannered, accepting, respectful and trustworthy. As a result, the atmosphere in school is calm and orderly, which in turn supports pupils' enthusiasm to learn.

Leaders have high ambitions for every pupil. This is reflected in the curriculum that is designed to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Across the curriculum, pupils learn well. From the early years onwards, pupils' positive attitudes to learning demonstrate the school's 'learning behaviours' of collaboration, resilience, reflectivity and challenge.

Pupils have extensive opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. For example, they can become elected members of the school council, or 'elves' who deliver Christmas gifts. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously. For example, pupils on the school council were keen to talk about their role in designing the well-being garden. Older pupils readily support younger peers with their reading and mathematics. Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading by holding positions such as pupil librarians. They look forward to the reading club, when they can choose to read together as a group.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have considered what pupils need to know and how this should be organised. The careful design of the curriculum means that, in most subjects, pupils develop a deep understanding over time. For example, in mathematics, children in the early years build their understanding of number by counting forwards and backwards in different steps. Pupils build on this solid foundation when learning their multiplication tables. Older pupils apply what they have learned about number when calculating perimeter, area or averages. Similarly, in art, pupils learn and

practise using subject-specific vocabulary. They apply this accurately when evaluating their own work and that of other artists.

Teachers typically check pupils' understanding carefully. However, in a few subjects, these checks are not consistently focused on the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember. This means that some pupils do not remember the key content. As a result, some pupils' understanding in these subjects is not as secure as it could be.

Reading is prioritised from the beginning of early years. All staff have appropriate training and implement the agreed phonics programme consistently. Pupils are provided with sufficient time to practise reading with books that are well matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils who need additional help are swiftly identified and well supported. This means that pupils develop as fluent and confident readers. There is a love of reading throughout the school. For example, careful consideration is given to the books that pupils read and hear read aloud. Pupils can become 'reading champions' and set challenges for other pupils. All pupils read and are read to regularly.

Pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly identified. Leaders ensure that each pupil's individual needs and agreed strategies of support are communicated to staff. Teachers make appropriate adaptations to tasks and activities, such as pre-teaching important content. This ensures that, wherever possible, pupils with SEND access the planned curriculum.

There are extensive opportunities for enrichment. A range of educational visits underpins the curriculum. For example, pupils recently visited the British Museum when learning about Ancient Greece. Pupils like being able to represent their school in singing events, such as the 'Young Voices' concert. Leaders have created a well-sequenced personal, social and health education curriculum. This provides pupils with the opportunity to learn about important issues such as mental health and well-being.

Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities. They are confident in challenging leaders and fulfil their statutory responsibilities.

Teachers value the support that they receive from leaders. They appreciate the consideration given to their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff receive appropriate training. This means that they are confident in how to identify and report any concerns that may arise. Staff are aware of the local risks that pupils and their families may face. This means that appropriate support can be signposted to families, such as through parent and carer workshops.

Leaders respond to concerns in a timely way, seeking advice from external agencies. The curriculum has been designed to help pupils to understand how to keep safe. This

includes teaching them about an age-appropriate understanding of consent. Similarly, pupils are provided with helpful suggestions on staying safe when working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, teachers do not consistently check that pupils have secured the most important knowledge. As a result, gaps in some pupils' knowledge are not routinely identified and corrected. This limits these pupils' understanding. Leaders should ensure that teachers focus on checking that pupils have secured the most important ideas identified in the curriculum.

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 March 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	101759
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10240310
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	590
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Smith
Headteacher	Sarah Garner
Website	www.smitham.croydon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is currently expanding, moving from two classes in each year group to three. The school has three classes in each year group up to and including Year 3.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative providers.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other members of staff.
- Discussions were held with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

- The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation and priorities for improvement.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were gathered through both discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sophie Healey-Welch, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023