

Inspection of Rowlands Gill Community Primary School

Dominines Close, Rowlands Gill, Tyne and Wear NE39 2PP

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have worked hard to bring about sustainable improvements since the school was judged to require improvement. They have created a welcoming, calm and inclusive school where expectations are high for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They achieve well. Many parents recognise the improvements that have been made and appreciate the good quality of education that pupils receive.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at breaktimes. They play cooperatively together, for example, during football games where boys and girls happily play alongside each other. Bullying is not a problem in the school. While pupils say that there can sometimes be name-calling and arguments, they are clear that adults quickly sort out these issues. Pupils know that there are trusted adults in school who they can go to if they are worried.

There is a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. After-school clubs such as karate, art and coding club are often oversubscribed. Pupils can choose to take on responsibilities such as being a school councillor or a recycling champion. They can also get involved with the local community through initiatives such as the digital voice project where some older pupils are supporting local, elderly residents with learning how to use technology.

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

Leaders have devised an ambitious curriculum. They have broken learning down into small steps and have identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn in all subjects. In some lessons, the tasks that teachers give pupils do not enable them to learn key knowledge because they are not sharply focused on what it is that pupils need to learn and remember. Where tasks are not well designed, pupils' attitudes to learning are not as positive, but this does not affect their behaviour.

Systems are in place in all subjects to check what pupils know. There are regular opportunities in lessons for pupils to revisit prior learning. Teachers use the outcomes of assessments well to inform future sequences of lessons. Appropriate adaptations are made for pupils with SEND to enable them to fully access the curriculum. Pupils who access the additionally resourced provision have frequent opportunities to integrate with and learn alongside their peers. The provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. Staff are trained well in how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND in their class.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. However, these expectations are not fully realised in practice. The standard of work that pupils produce varies between subjects. For example, in history, pupils do not always apply some of the basic skills

that they have learned in their English lessons, such as capitalising proper nouns and applying taught spelling rules, and this often goes uncorrected by teachers.

The curriculum in the early years prepares children well for key stage 1. Leaders are working to refine it further so that it takes more account of children's starting points and the context of the school. There are plentiful opportunities for children to develop their early reading, writing and mathematics skills through carefully planned activities. Adults focus on developing children's communication and language skills. Adults interact effectively with children within the provision.

Children begin to learn to read as soon as they start school. In Nursery, children are exposed to a wide range of stories, rhymes and songs before being taught more formal phonics in Reception. Adults teach the phonics programme consistently. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind with reading are supported to catch up with their peers. The books that pupils read closely match the sounds that they know. Initiatives such as 'mystery readers' and regular visits to the library help pupils to develop a love of reading.

Leaders have thought carefully about pupils' personal development. Educational visits to places such as Saltwell Park and Lockerbie enhance pupils' experience of the curriculum and enable them to develop skills such as teamwork and resilience. Visitors to school, for example firefighters and scientists, help to raise pupils' aspirations for the future. Pupils have a very clear understanding of equality and tolerance. Leaders consider how they learn about the protected characteristics. For example, during assemblies pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They engage with elderly residents within the community through making Christmas cards for them and they recently participated in an LGBTQ+ workshop.

The local authority and governors provide effective support to leaders. Governors have a secure understanding of their role and are knowledgeable about the school. There is a strong sense of collegiality. Staff report high levels of consideration for their workload and well-being. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors are clear about how to report and record concerns. They are trained in a range of aspects of safeguarding and know pupils and their families well. This means that they spot any signs and symptoms of abuse quickly. Some governors and senior leaders are trained in safer recruitment. Strong procedures are in place to ensure that the right staff are recruited to the school. Safeguarding records are detailed and show evidence of leaders taking timely action to ensure pupils are safe, including using external agencies for support where necessary.

Leaders consider how to teach pupils about local risks, such as the river. Pupils talk confidently about how to stay safe both online and offline.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders have identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. However, sometimes the tasks that teachers give pupils in lessons do not enable them to learn this knowledge. Leaders should ensure that teachers make appropriate pedagogical choices about the activities that pupils complete in lessons so that they develop detailed knowledge and skills.
- Teachers' expectations in terms of pupils' application of basic skills are not consistently high, particularly in the foundation subjects. For example, instances of incorrect letter formation in key stage 1 are often not addressed. Similarly in key stage 2, pupils sometimes omit basic punctuation or do not apply taught spelling rules and adults do not correct this. Leaders should ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils across all subjects.

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	131081
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10268316
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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Graham Archer
Headteacher	Lindsey Clarke
Website	www.rowlandsgillprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	18 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is an additionally resourced mainstream school (ARMS). It provides education for up to eight key stage 2 pupils with speech, language and communication needs, moderate learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties. Places in the ARMS unit are secured through the local authority.
- In recent years, there has been significant staff turnover, including within the senior leadership team.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has a nursery which accepts children from the term after their third birthday.
- Before- and after-school childcare is available on the school site. However, this is operated by an external provider.
- A playgroup for children under the age of five operates on the school site. This is not linked to the school and is a separate, registered provider.

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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, subject leaders, the chair and other members of the governing body and the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. 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.
- The personal, social and health education curriculum was reviewed, along with the school's approach to pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors visited and met with pupils from the school's ARMS unit. They also spoke to some parents of pupils with SEND.
- Pupils were observed reading to familiar adults.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes was observed.
- Inspectors examined the single central record and looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. Inspectors spoke to leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- The responses made by parents to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, were considered as part of the inspection, including any free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector

Kate Longstaff His Majesty's Inspector

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