

Inspection of The R J Mitchell Primary School

Tangmere Crescent, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 5PP

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

New leaders have high ambitions for pupils. They have implemented a curriculum that aims to ensure that all pupils enjoy learning and achieve well in all subjects. However, this curriculum is not embedded. What pupils experience and learn does not consistently match leaders' ambition. Pupils are not remembering knowledge well in all subjects.

All pupils, including those in the resourced provisions, access a curriculum that is broad and balanced. Raising expectations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is one of leaders' top priorities. Leaders have made sure that staff have the training to support the individual needs of pupils effectively.

The behaviour of pupils is conducive to learning. Pupils listen to each other and follow instructions. There is a calm and happy atmosphere at breaktime. Pupils play well together and enjoy using the range of available resources. High levels of staff supervision ensure that any pupil who needs support or care receives this swiftly. Staff make sure that pupils are kept safe.

Pupils have opportunities to take on positions of responsibility, such as by becoming learning ambassadors and digital leaders. Pupils enjoy the clubs that are offered. Leaders consult with pupils and families about the extra-curricular offer, including plans to increase the variety of educational visits and clubs.

Parents and carers are appreciative of all the care that their children receive.

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

Leaders are working on ensuring that the design and delivery of the curriculum is ambitious for all subjects. The effectiveness of leaders' actions is already evident in the early years and in some subjects, including reading and mathematics, where pupils learn and remember knowledge securely. Leaders' work remains ongoing in other subjects. This means that pupils do not acquire knowledge securely and in depth across the curriculum.

Curriculum thinking begins in the early years. Here, much thought has been given to making sure that children achieve well. Children are prepared for what they will study next because the curriculum in all areas of learning is well thought out and delivered effectively.

The national curriculum is at the heart of all curriculum design in Years 1 to 6. Leaders have thought about what they want pupils to learn. Subject leaders are working on making this vision a reality. This includes making sure that teachers have the subject knowledge and pedagogical skills needed to deliver the new curriculum. As part of this, subject leaders are delivering appropriate, subject-specific training to staff. Teachers aim to help pupils enjoy their learning and use their subject

knowledge to bring the curriculum to life. However, this implementation is still at an early stage. Sometimes, the way the curriculum is taught does not help pupils to grasp and recall key subject knowledge. Some activities do not link coherently to what pupils need to learn. On occasion, pupils experience long gaps between being taught knowledge and then building on and applying this learning. This makes it hard for pupils to remember ideas in the long term.

Pupils learn early reading, including phonics, in an effective way. Teachers have the expertise to successfully deliver the early reading programme. This is because leaders have ensured that they have received appropriate training. Pupils enjoy reading. Pupils learn and practise sounds step by step. Leaders have thought less carefully about the stories that will be shared with pupils and how this supports their development of knowledge and language across the curriculum.

Pupils with SEND receive effective individualised and adapted support. Where appropriate, they learn the same curriculum as their peers. The resourced provisions provide support for those with the greatest needs. The resourced provision in the Nursery class is particularly effective in supporting children's development.

Pupils behave well. There is little disruption to learning. Leaders are making further adaptations to the behaviour policy to strengthen pupils' attitudes and conduct. They want pupils to take greater ownership of their behaviour and the choices they make. In the early years, consistent routines and expectations are well established. Children learn and behave in considerate ways.

Leaders have introduced a new personal, health and social education curriculum. This ensures that pupils receive appropriate learning relating to relationships, personal safety and online safety. Pupils are taught to interact with others, both adults and their peers alike, in polite, kind and sensible ways. They learn about respect and how to show this in their behaviour.

New leaders have significantly invested in the professional learning of all staff. This includes both guidance on delivering the curriculum and training on how to promote pupils' welfare and meet their emotional needs. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and well-being. Staff appreciate this.

The governing body is effective in holding leaders to account. Governors work closely with leaders to identify the right areas for improvement, ensuring that these are acted on in a timely and effective way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a rigorous culture of safeguarding at the school. They have introduced new routines to the day to further safeguard pupils. Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training to support them in upholding their

safeguarding duties. Staff know how to report concerns, and these are swiftly addressed.

Leaders and all staff are particularly aware of the need to offer extra support to pupils in the resourced provision. Staff are aware that they may communicate their safeguarding and well-being needs in a different way.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' aims for the curriculum are more established in some subjects than others. In the subjects where curriculum thinking is new, the way the curriculum is taught does not routinely help pupils to grasp important ideas and concepts. Leaders should continue to focus on developing the professional knowledge of teachers, ensuring that the curriculum is taught as intended.
- In some teaching, activity choices do not closely match to the knowledge that teachers want the pupils to learn. This leads to pupils being unable to practise or apply what they are being taught or secure their understanding. Leaders should take further steps to develop how well staff provide pupils with purposeful learning tasks that link closely to what pupils are expected to learn and remember in a subject.

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	131590
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10268074
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	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lorraine Earle
Head of school	Feroza Wells
Website	www.rjmitchellprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The head of school has been appointed since the school's previous inspection.
- The school has formed a federation with another local primary school since the school's previous inspection. These two schools share a governing body.
- The school has two resourced provisions. One for Nursery-aged children and one for older pupils of primary school age. Both provisions cater primarily for needs related to autism spectrum disorder.
- The school operates a nurture group for children in Reception with additional needs.
- Leaders use no alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with senior leaders, including the executive headteacher for the federation and the head of school. They also met with the chair and other members of the governing body.
- The inspection included deep dives in these subjects: art, early reading, mathematics, physical education and science. The inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning, and met with subject leaders and teachers.
- The inspectors also visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work for some other subjects.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, the inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. The inspectors also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- The inspectors met with pupils to discuss aspects of safeguarding. They spoke to pupils during lesson visits. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. The inspectors spoke to staff about behaviour and about their workload in the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Luke Stubbles, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Maureen Okoye	Ofsted Inspector
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