

Inspection of Russell Street School

Russell Street, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK11 1BT

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this exceptional school. This is a lively, happy and safe place where pupils develop curiosity and a love of learning. The environment around the school is carefully considered to capture pupils' interest. Young children thrive when they join the school, developing confidence and independence very quickly.

Pupils are kind and respectful. They have a keen understanding of fairness and equality. Warm, supportive relationships underpin all of the excellent work the school does. Pupils adopt the same calm and considerate manner that they see staff model.

Ambition and high achievement are expected here. Pupils enjoy the challenge. They know the value of learning and say that they want to learn to read so they 'can read anything and learn anything'. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve highly, including in national tests at the end of key stage 1.

Pupils celebrate their own successes and each other's. Through weekly 'WOW' assemblies, they learn to be proud of their efforts and creativity. They learn about different cultures and faiths. All pupils are helped to develop talents and interests through clubs, trips, forest school and the very rich curriculum.

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

The school is relentless in its aim to ensure all pupils achieve highly. The needs of pupils with SEND are planned for and met successfully throughout the curriculum. Skilful adaptations to lessons, where needed, mean pupils who need extra support keep up. There is a palpable sense of purpose and ambition at this school, which is carried out exceptionally well.

The curriculum is highly effective. From the age of three, children in the Nursery benefit from precise and expert support. Through carefully chosen activities, children develop strong social skills and a thorough grounding in all areas of learning. Reading and mathematics are extremely well developed in the early years. This means pupils leave Reception fully prepared to learn in Year 1.

Staff teach expertly so that pupils' knowledge builds securely over time. This means pupils develop a deep understanding in all subjects. They remember what they have been taught and explain their thinking confidently and accurately. Early reading is taught with careful precision at the earliest opportunity. Consequently, pupils learn to read fluently very quickly.

Staff check what pupils know and remember effectively. They identify quickly when pupils misunderstand or fall behind. High-quality and prompt extra support means pupils catch up rapidly. This support ensures all pupils, including pupils with SEND, achieve their best. Pupils' work demonstrates their sophisticated understanding of subjects. For example, pupils make comprehensive and accurate comparisons of

mammals and fish, explaining different breathing and movement techniques, in science.

Pupils behave with remarkable maturity. They are taught safe and respectful routines early. Adults have a deep understanding of child development. Expert staff help children develop excellent communication and language skills from the very beginning. This means children can explain how they feel and interact well with others. Children, therefore, settle quickly when they start school. They make the most of the exceptional teaching and valuable wider opportunities throughout the school.

Pupils' broader development is as rigorously planned as the academic curriculum. Pupils develop resilience, independence and empathy through studying historical events, such as the experiences of Rosa Parks, and learning about people from different backgrounds and with different faiths. They remember what they have learned and have a remarkably well-developed sense of right and wrong.

Pupils have a detailed understanding of important issues such as mental health and well-being. They know how to take care of themselves physically and mentally through local walks in the community, 'heart-raising' activities and daily 'mental health check-ins'. Pupils understand that being healthy helps them to learn well. They also develop early leadership skills through taking turns as house captains who lead the class during breaks, at sporting events and during classroom activities.

The school benefits from leaders and governors who understand and fulfil their roles very effectively. They challenge each other to make sure decisions and changes have the benefit of pupils at the centre. Staff are proud to work in such an inspirational school. They are supported well by leaders to manage workload and maintain high levels of well-being. Staff are supported to enrich and widen their professional knowledge continually. They use this knowledge effectively to make sure that the school meets pupils' needs extremely well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 110252 |
| Local authority | Milton Keynes |
| Inspection number | 10256309 |
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 215 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Naomi Sumpter |
| Headteacher | Dawn Robinson |
| Website | www.russell-street-school.co.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 22 and 23 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They considered the views expressed on Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Ally Aldridge-Gibbons, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector

Fiona Henderson Ofsted Inspector

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