

Inspection of The Russell Primary School

The Russell School, Petersham Road, Petersham, Richmond, Surrey TW10 7AH

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming and caring school. Relationships are positive because staff know pupils well and respond to their needs swiftly. This contributes to pupils feeling happy and being kept safe at school. Parents and carers speak highly of the school community and the nurturing and supportive environment.

Pupils behave well and are polite and respectful towards each other. Weekly assemblies and the 'five ways to well-being' help pupils learn about looking after their emotions. For example, pupils enjoy going to 'The Reef' room if they are feeling anxious or need time to calm down.

Leaders and staff have high expectations. Pupils rise to these aspirations and typically achieve well. 'Learning passports' provide pupils with wider opportunities, such as growing vegetables and performing for the local community. Pupils are encouraged to help others and to understand what it means to be a good citizen. For example, pupils in Year 4 readily take on the role of 'play buddies' with pupils from the specialist provision that shares the same site. Music is an integral part of school life. All pupils learn to play a range of instruments and there is a thriving orchestra, band and choir.

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

Pupils learn a curriculum that matches the breadth and ambition of what is expected nationally. In most subjects, the important knowledge leaders expect pupils to learn and remember has been identified. This is well sequenced so that pupils return to, practise and embed their learning before tackling more complex ideas. This helps pupils to develop a depth of knowledge in these subjects over time. For example, in music, younger pupils learn to use dot and line notation. They draw on this knowledge when learning pitch notation and reading music from a stave.

However, the curriculum in a few subjects has not been designed as effectively. In these instances, the concepts pupils need to secure are not as clearly defined or sequenced. As a result, teaching does not focus sufficiently on the most important knowledge, and pupils do not secure as deep an understanding in these subjects.

Leaders ensure reading is a priority. In the Nursery, children engage positively with stories, rhymes and songs. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start their Reception Year. Staff are typically well trained and support pupils to develop their reading fluency. Pupils practise reading using books that are well matched to the sounds they know. Staff identify pupils who may be falling behind their peers and give targeted support so they can catch up quickly. Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading. For example, pupils enjoy regular trips to the local library and visits from well-known authors.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn alongside their peers. Staff identify needs accurately and at an early stage. Support is carefully considered

to meet those needs. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They typically check what pupils know and can do. However, where the curriculum is less effectively designed, assessment is not used as consistently to identify and address pupils' misconceptions in a timely way. This limits the depth of understanding for some pupils.

Behaviour around the school and in the playground is calm and orderly. Most pupils focus well in lessons and approach their learning positively. Leaders have created an environment where pupils and staff feel valued. Pupils understand the importance of respect for others. Staff encourage pupils to talk about their emotions and pupils are taught about the importance of mental and physical health. Attendance is high and leaders have effective systems in place to follow up absences.

Leaders have given careful thought to the extensive enrichment programme on offer. For example, a range of residential visits are designed to develop pupils' independence. Staff ensure that all pupils have access to the wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include various sports clubs, and activities such as chess, art and German. Leaders are rightly proud of the opportunities pupils have to nurture their talents in music. Pupils discuss and debate issues and ideas by reflecting on a wide range of topics each week.

Staff enjoy working at the school and say that leaders are considerate of their workload. Those responsible for governance meet all of their statutory obligations and carry out their role effectively. For example, they understand the school's strengths and have identified appropriate priorities for development moving forward.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the important ideas that pupils should learn and remember have not been as well defined and sequenced. This means subject-specific concepts are not consistently reinforced or checked. As a result, some pupils do not build their knowledge as securely over time in these subjects. The school must ensure that the curriculum is coherently designed, sequenced and implemented.

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

Unique reference number	102896
Local authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	10293250
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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Cutting
Headteacher	Laura Brooks
Website	www.russell.richmond.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's headteacher took up their post in September 2023.
- There are no registered alternative providers used by the school.
- The school shares a site with another school.

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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other school leaders. They also met with members of the governing body and the local authority school improvement partner.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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 considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sabrina Edwards, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jude Wilson

His Majesty's Inspector

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