

Inspection of Russell Scott Primary School

Clare Street, Denton, Manchester M34 3LQ

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy and benefit from the warm and friendly culture at Russell Scott Primary School. They look forward to coming to school.

The school has high expectations of what pupil should achieve. Pupils are encouraged to 'reach high and go far'. They benefit from a broad range of opportunities to learn about different subjects. As they move through the school, their knowledge develops securely so that they achieve well.

Pupils enjoy high-quality relationships with staff. They appreciate the interest that staff take in them. Pupils receive sensitive care and support when they face challenges in their lives and learning.

Pupils learn about how important it is to be kind to others. This helps them to form and maintain friendships. Staff quickly help pupils to overcome disagreements when they occur.

Pupils learn how to look after themselves. For example, staff support pupils to understand their feelings. Pupils particularly enjoy the sporting life of the school, including daily opportunities to participate in different games at playtime or lunch.

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

The school ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), receive a well-balanced education that takes account of their starting points and needs. For the most part, this ensures that pupils develop the knowledge that they need to progress well through the curriculum. Consequently, when pupils reach the end of Year 6, they achieve well and are ready for the next stage of their education.

The school ensures that subject curriculums are ambitious. Staff are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn. Pupils learn content in a sensible order.

Staff, including those in the early years, use well-matched resources to help children and pupils learn subject content. For example, children in the Nursery and Reception classes use different objects to help them count with confidence. Older pupils make strong links between reading and writing because staff introduce them to carefully chosen texts to model different writing styles.

Staff confidently use their well-honed subject knowledge to explain curriculum content clearly. Across subjects, pupils usually benefit from appropriate activities. For example, staff in the early years help children to talk about and explore what they are learning. Elsewhere, pupils have well-designed opportunities to practise and recap what they have learned. Staff make effective use of assessment strategies to identify what pupils know and remember. They use this information

well to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. This helps pupils gain more knowledge as they move through Years 1 to 6.

In recent years, the school has strengthened its approaches to early reading. However, these recent changes have not had enough time to impact on published data. The unvalidated data shows that, in 2023, many pupils did not reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. That said, pupils are making greater gains in developing their phonics knowledge. Children in the early years quickly experience a range of opportunities to develop their language and communication. For example, staff pique children's interest with stories, rhymes and songs. Children in the Reception class and pupils in key stage 1 benefit from well-structured opportunities to acquire their knowledge of sounds and letters. Staff carefully match reading resources to the sounds that pupils are learning. They check pupils' learning carefully to quickly identify gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. Staff refine what pupils learn next and provide additional targeted support for those pupils who struggle to keep up.

Pupils are encouraged and supported to read in school and at home. As they move through the school, pupils grow to enjoy taking part in reading events and competitions. From these, many pupils gain a love of reading different types of books.

Some children join the Nursery or Reception classes without some of the behaviours and knowledge that they need to learn well. This affects the attention and listening skills of some children. The school identifies these gaps promptly. Staff design a range of opportunities to help many children make suitable gains in their social, emotional and physical development. This helps the majority of children to quickly benefit from the early years curriculum. However, a minority do not overcome their barriers to learning fast enough. This impedes their success in some areas of learning and hampers their readiness for Year 1.

The school appropriately identifies the needs of pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision. Staff support these pupils to progress well through the curriculum.

Pupils are well guided about how they should behave. Staff show pupils how to be polite and courteous. Pupils develop these traits quickly. This helps pupils to cooperate well with staff and to work and play with others harmoniously.

Pupils benefit from well-connected opportunities to support their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Carefully focused lessons, trips and visits help pupils to understand how to develop relationships, value people and be a positive member of their community.

The school's thoughtful consideration of staff's workload ensures that staff make a positive contribution to the development of the curriculum. Staff are suitably supported to develop their practice. However, this support is more developed in some subjects than in others. In some subjects, the school has begun to establish

more effective checks on the quality of education. In these subjects, staff benefit from useful insights into their strengths and areas for development. In other subjects, this practice is at an earlier stage of development. This means that teachers do not receive the advice and guidance that they need to improve their delivery of these subject curriculums.

Governors are suitably experienced and knowledgeable. This ensures that they undertake the full range of their responsibilities effectively. They hold the school to account effectively. In doing so, they promote a culture of support and close engagement with all parts of the school community, including staff, pupils and parents and carers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some children in the early years do not develop their attention and listening skills quickly enough. This affects how quickly they gain phonics knowledge and, as a result, how quickly they gain knowledge in other subjects. The school should ensure that staff are well equipped to support children to overcome their barriers to learning so that they progress well through the early years curriculum.
- In some subjects, the checks on the quality of education are not as effective as they are in other curriculum areas. In these subjects, staff do not get a rich insight of how to strengthen their practice. The school should ensure that staff benefit from advice and guidance about how to strengthen their practice across all of the subjects that they teach.

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	106206
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10241890
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	457
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Elaine Healey
Headteacher	Steve Marsland
Website	www.russellscottblogs.net/
Dates of previous inspection	17 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND in Years 3 to 6. This provision provides education for up to six pupils with education, health and care plans. At the time of this inspection, the specially resourced provision was providing education for a small number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and a small number of pupils with a range of more complex needs.
- The school does not currently make use of 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.
- 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 and other senior leaders. They met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 spoke with leaders responsible for SEND and reading. They also looked at information about the support for pupils with additional needs.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and around the school site. They also scrutinised behaviour and attendance records.
- During the inspection, it was not possible to gather the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's online questionnaires. Inspectors ensured that they spoke with pupils from all year groups and held discussions with all groups of staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. However, parents did not get the opportunity to share their views through Ofsted's free-text facility. Inspectors further took account of the views of parents by speaking with parents of pupils from all key stages.

Inspection team

Michael Pennington, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Liz Davidson	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Tibbits	Ofsted Inspector

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