

Inspection of a good school: The Ryde School

Pleasant Rise, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL9 5DR

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

Outcome

The Ryde School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils attend a welcoming, caring and nurturing school. They feel a strong sense of belonging at The Ryde School. The school is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn well. One parent described the views of many when stating, 'Teachers are great at really understanding what makes each child tick and using their interests to progress learning.'

Pupils and staff form warm relationships. The school is a calm and orderly place. Staff expect pupils to behave well. Pupils are safe and feel confident that staff can resolve their disagreements. Pupils understand and follow the school values to be 'respectful, ambitious, safe, creative and resilient'. They demonstrate these values in lessons and at social times.

Pupils have many enrichment opportunities. They embrace outdoor learning. Visitors and trips, such as a whole-school trip to Walton-on-the-Naze, help pupils engage with their learning and bring the curriculum to life. For example, the trip helped Year 6 pupils to understand coastal erosion.

Pupils learn about different cultures and traditions. They treat each other and adults with respect. Pupils are given opportunities to effect change through roles such as those of school councillor and eco-rep. They make good use of extra-curricular clubs.

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

The school has designed a robust and carefully considered curriculum. It has thought about what pupils need to learn and the order in which they learn it. This means that staff know what to teach and when to teach it. The curriculum generally meets pupils' needs and prepares them effectively for their next stage of education. However, the curriculum in some subjects is new and needs time to embed. As a result, in these areas, the school has not checked how well the curriculum is working. In these subjects, pupils have gaps in their learning.

Teachers deliver the curriculum effectively through carefully chosen activities. They present learning in a logical order that helps pupils to build on what they already know. Teachers use a range of checks to find out how well pupils are learning. They are skilled at breaking down learning into smaller steps when needed. This enables pupils to succeed, and their motivation increases.

Leaders are determined that all pupils will experience the full breadth of the curriculum. They have well-established systems to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. This includes seeking advice from external agencies when necessary. Adults support pupils with SEND effectively. They help these pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers.

The school has made reading a priority. Children start to learn their letters and sounds as soon as they join the school. Skilled staff deliver the school's phonics programme well. They regularly check pupils' understanding. This means that they can quickly identify pupils who have gaps in their knowledge and support these pupils with targeted practice. Pupils strengthen their learning by reading books that only contain the sounds that they have learned. Teachers read to their classes daily. Pupils have access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Teachers skilfully choose texts that broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding in different subjects.

Transition arrangements enable children in early years to settle quickly. Pupils are polite and helpful. They behave well. They are curious learners who have positive attitudes. Activities inspire children's learning and enable them to develop their independence.

Disruption to pupils' learning is rare, and pupils remain focused in lessons. The school has taken steps to prioritise attendance. It works effectively with families to address any barriers and celebrate positive attendance.

The school actively promotes pupils' personal development. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to care for the school's guinea pigs. The school has thought carefully about the opportunities that it provides beyond the curriculum. Pupils know that everyone is equal. They develop respect for, and an appreciation of, the diversity in their school and local communities. They have a lived experience of democracy through elections for pupil leadership roles. Pupils have high regard for these positions and look up to these role models. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders work closely with colleagues to bring about improvements that benefit staff and pupils alike. Staff said that they enjoy working at the school. This is because their well-being is prioritised. When making decisions about the school, leaders are mindful of the impact on staff's workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some subjects is less well developed than in others. Where this is the case, pupils' learning does not build sufficiently well on their prior knowledge. This means that pupils do not know and remember all the key knowledge that has been identified in the curriculum plan. Leaders should continue to embed the newly introduced curriculum plans so that pupils build up the knowledge and skills they need.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2014.

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	117313
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10294976
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	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rosemary Ramsdale
Headteacher	Sue Thompson
Website	www.ryde.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses the services of one alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, the SEND coordinator, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- To gather the views of pupils, the inspector spoke to groups of pupils, including in lessons and at breaktime.
- The inspector spoke with parents and carers and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- To gather the views of staff, the inspector spoke to several staff members and took account of responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Simon Eardley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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