Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Rowanfield Junior School

Alstone Lane, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL51 8HY

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 April 2025

Outcome

Rowanfield Junior School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Rowanfield Junior School's ethos is built on the '4Ds: dream, drive, duty and dazzle'. The school creates a strong culture of belonging for pupils and staff. The school has clear routines and high expectations for pupil behaviour. Pupils understand their own duty to behave well. They have positive attitudes towards their learning. This means that the school is calm and pupils can learn without disruption.

Pupils enjoy school and trust adults to help them with any worries. The school supports pupils with their individual needs. This means that pupils increasingly achieve well in their end of key stage assessments.

Pupils complete a 'bucket list' of experiences throughout their time at the school. For example, seeing a panto at the theatre, learning to ride a bike or toasting a marshmallow. Whole school events such as street parties bring the community together and are memorable moments for pupils. These cultural experiences support pupils' personal development.

Pupils value the leadership responsibilities they are given at the school. Members of the 'Pupil Parliament' help leaders to make decisions. House captains lead activities for younger pupils, acting as positive role models. Pupils are proud of the rewards they are given, knowing they have 'dazzled'.

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

The school, with the support of the trust, has made refinements to the curriculum. In many subjects the school has clearly set out what pupils will learn and when. Teachers clearly model and explain the work to pupils and this helps develop pupils' knowledge and

understanding. For example, demonstrating reflections in mathematics. However, in some subjects the sequence of what pupils learn does not build on prior learning. In these cases, pupils have difficulty remembering what they have learned over time.

The school actively promotes the importance of reading. Pupils enjoy sharing books and read to adults regularly. Pupils use stories as inspiration for their own writing. Pupils who need additional support with reading receive effective help. They quickly improve their reading accuracy and fluency. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also confidently develop their written and spoken English.

The school effectively identifies the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are supported with their learning and personal development by well trained adults. This means that these pupils' needs are met and they are able to learn alongside their peers.

Attendance is improving steadily as the result of the determined work of leaders. When attendance requires improvement staff work with pupils and their families to provide bespoke support. Pupils want to attend school because they enjoy their learning and do not want to miss out.

The pastoral support provided to pupils and their families is extensive. The 'community hub' is open daily to provide a warm welcome to parents and carers. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and well. For example, they recognise the risks of being online. Pupils are taught about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. They understand their responsibilities as a citizen, such as following laws and showing tolerance towards others. The sensitive support provided for young carers and pupils who have been bereaved show the lengths that the school goes to help their pupils.

An active lifestyle is encouraged across the school. All pupils engage in extra-curricular sport either for fun or competition. Pupils enjoy trying out new sports to discover hidden talents or new interests. For example, the newly formed school curling team returned with their recent trophy to great applause.

Those responsible for governance understand their responsibilities. There are many areas of school where the positive impacts of leaders' actions can be seen, such as within phonics and writing. The school is not complacent and the trust has ensured that there is both challenge and support for the school.

The school is considerate of the workload and well-being of staff. Staff value the extensive range of professional development pathways provided by the trust. There is a shared determination from staff for all pupils to succeed. This inclusive ethos continues to drive the improvement work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not identified precisely what pupils will learn and when. As a result, the curriculum in these subjects does not build pupils' knowledge well enough over time. The trust should ensure that all areas of the curriculum are clearly defined so that pupils develop their understanding and can recall their learning.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2020.

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	137255
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10378928
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Morris
CEO of the trust	Claire Savory
Headteacher	Roxanne Tyler
Website	www.rowanfield-junior.gloucs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Gloucestershire Learning Alliance trust.
- The school shares its headteacher with Rowanfield Infant School.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with school leaders at all levels. The inspector also spoke with teaching staff, support staff, trust executive leaders and trustees.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes.
- The inspector viewed a range of school documentation, including the minutes of trustee meetings, the school's self-evaluation documents and improvement plans.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the view 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 considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to the staff survey and pupil survey. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the end of the school day.

Inspection team

Sara Berry, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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