

Inspection of Rowsley CofE (Controlled) Primary School

Woodhouse Road, Rowsley, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2ED

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 May 2024

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| 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 small, friendly and welcoming school. Many say that they look forward to coming to school because of the love and care that teachers show them. There are strong relationships between the staff and pupils. The intimate nature of the school and its ethos mean all pupils are known well by staff. Pupils say that they feel safe.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One comment typical of many was: 'The school is a fantastic learning community full of love and respect.'

Pupils behave well and care for each other. Older pupils take responsibility for looking after younger children. They reflect the school's values that staff model. Pupils know that staff will take any worries they may have seriously. They trust that staff will sort out any issues of unkind behaviour fairly.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Staff want pupils to develop a love of learning and enjoy 'life in all its fulness'. This ambition underpins all of the school's activities. Pupils thrive and grow in confidence as a result of the rich experiences the school provides.

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

Pupils are proud of their school. They know they are part of a community where staff have the best interests of children at the heart of all they do. This is particularly shown in the opportunities that the school provides for pupils to develop their character. Pupils discuss important issues from the weekly news. They learn about the similarities and differences between world cultures. They develop empathy for children in other countries. They work on charitable activities to raise money to help support education projects in India. They contribute strongly to the school and the local community. Pupils visit places that deepen their understanding of the topics they are studying. Visitors to the school inspire pupils to broaden their horizons. The school's values of inclusion and respect are owned and practised by all pupils. Pupils benefit from lessons and discussions about different faiths and beliefs. All of these rich experiences prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Pupils work hard to please staff because of the strong relationships they have with them. Pupils appreciate the boundaries and routines that staff provide and behave well.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Staff know individual pupils well. They use this knowledge to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. These pupils are supported to access the full curriculum.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. Their provision has been carefully mapped out so they can make the most of all learning opportunities.

Children talked about what they had discovered. They are well prepared for their next stage at school.

There is an ambitious curriculum in place in most subjects. In many subjects, there is careful thought given to what important knowledge and skills pupils need to learn and when. However, in some subjects, the work pupils are given does not always match the ambitious aims of the curriculum. In these subjects, pupils do not always develop the full range of knowledge and skills outlined in the curriculum.

Teachers recap previous learning at the start of lessons and use questions effectively to check that pupils understand what they are learning. However, teachers do not always address gaps in the knowledge of some pupils with SEND before they move on to new learning.

Teachers use their good subject knowledge to present information clearly and engage pupils in interesting learning activities. Pupils work with increasing independence to complete the tasks teachers give them. As a result, in most subjects, pupils are remembering more and growing in confidence as learners.

The school promotes a love of reading. A wide range of books are freely available. Staff pass on their passion for reading by recommending books for pupils to read. Reading is prioritised by ensuring that pupils read regularly. Younger pupils have daily phonics lessons taught by well-trained staff. The books they read are well matched to the sounds they know. This allows most pupils to become accurate and fluent readers quickly.

The school is well led. Governors understand their role and carry out their duties effectively. All staff are passionate about continually improving the school. They say that they feel valued and cared for and that their workload is carefully considered. They are proud to 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 ambitious intent of the curriculum is not always matched by learning opportunities that fully develop the intended knowledge and skills the school has identified. Opportunities are missed for pupils to develop and demonstrate their knowledge and skills in these areas. The school needs to ensure that in all subjects, pupils are provided with clear and ambitious learning activities that help them develop the precisely identified knowledge and skills they need to be successful in these curriculums.

- The assessment of what pupils know does not always shape what teachers do next. The knowledge gaps of some pupils with SEND are not always addressed before they are moved on to new learning. These gaps persist for some pupils and hinder their progress through the curriculum. The school should ensure that teachers use information from assessment activities to inform future teaching and set precise targets that address any pupils' knowledge gaps, so they are not allowed to persist.

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 | 112820 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 10298388 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 62 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Adrian Thornhill |
| Headteacher | Alexia Wyer |
| Website | www.rowsleyprimary.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 16 November 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with one other primary school. Alexia Wyer is the executive headteacher of both schools, and they share a governing body.
- The school does not 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.
- Inspectors held various meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also met with a group of governors, including the chair.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics and history. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered some other subjects, art, religious education (RE) and science. They evaluated the curriculum plans, visited some RE lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- The lead inspector looked at pupils' education, health and care plans and other individual education plans, as well as discussing the provision for selected individuals when considering the support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation document and development plans.
- 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 took note of the responses received on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and considered the results of the staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors met with pupils to gather their views.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

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