Inspection of an outstanding school: Roseacre Junior School

The Landway, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent ME14 4BL

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Roseacre is a happy, calm and caring school where pupils are nurtured and thrive. Pupils enjoy their time in school. They are enthusiastic learners who are inspired and motivated by their skilled and caring teachers. Pupils live up to teachers' high expectations for their learning. They work very hard and always do their best.

Pupils are valued and know that their opinions matter and that staff will always help them. One pupil's view is shared by many others: 'I'm never afraid to ask if I'm stuck because the teachers are kind and always help you to do what you didn't think you could.' Pupils develop a thirst for learning. They are curious and excited to learn.

Pupils behave extremely well in lessons, during social times and in the playground. They get on well together and look out for each other. Pupils are not worried about bullying and feel safe. Pupils trust that adults will listen and help.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' personal as well as their academic achievements. Parents are very supportive of the school and the vision of the new leadership. One parent summed this up: 'The headteacher's fresh approach is really nice for the children and parents.'

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

The interim headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school. He has carefully identified the school's many strengths and what needed further work. Parents greatly value the increased communication and interaction between home and school. For instance, parents appreciate the headteacher's open-door policy and his presence, along with other senior leaders, at the gate every morning. The extended before- and after-school hours have also been extremely well received. Leaders' action planning is precise

and focused for future work. Several other initiatives have not yet had time to show their full impact. For example, an additional leader has recently been employed to further strengthen the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Reading is a priority. There is a strong focus on fostering an enjoyment of reading. Pupils read a wide range of books. Most pupils become fluent, confident readers. However, a few pupils are still at the early stages of learning to read. The books that these pupils read are not always matched to their reading knowledge. This means that some of the weakest readers do not learn to read as quickly and fluently. Leaders have identified that some aspects of the current phonics programme are not working as effectively as they should. They are taking action to address this.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. They have identified the important knowledge and skills that pupils should learn in each subject. Learning is well sequenced. This means that pupils build their knowledge and understanding as they move through the year groups. Teachers check on pupils' learning in a range of ways, which they then use to plan subsequent learning. This makes sure that pupils' learning builds securely on what they already know. Pupils achieve well overall. This includes pupils with SEND. Staff identify these pupils' individual needs accurately and teachers and teaching assistants know what to do to support them effectively.

Subject leaders are skilled and knowledgeable. Their guidance and support ensure that all teachers are confident and have the expertise to teach the broad range of subjects. There is a strong sense of teamwork among leaders and staff. Teachers explain concepts clearly. In mathematics, for example, key concepts are revisited to ensure that pupils remember key mathematical knowledge. They use well-chosen resources to help pupils master new ideas. In history, pupils refer to timelines around the school and in the playground to help their understanding of chronology.

Pupils are respectful of each other and adults. They listen to others' opinions even if they do not agree with them. Pupils are proud of their leadership roles. They enjoy a range of trips, visits, clubs and extra activities, including mathematics competitions. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school. They feel well supported by leaders. Staff welcome the opportunities to further develop their expertise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors are all fully trained in safeguarding matters and understand their responsibilities. They know what to be aware of to keep pupils safe. Staff know pupils very well and can quickly identify any signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know the procedures to follow if they have a concern, and take swift action when necessary. Leaders seek advice from specialist services where appropriate. They are in the process of transferring safeguarding information to an online recording system. Leaders are vigilant in ensuring the rigour of this process.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of pupils do not have the phonics knowledge necessary to progress with their reading. This means that they are not learning to read and develop fluency quickly enough. Specific gaps in their learning are not always targeted precisely enough. Books are not always well matched to pupils' reading knowledge, so they are sometimes reading at a level which causes them frustration. Leaders should rapidly implement the planned phonics programme to ensure that pupils catch up quickly and rapidly develop as fluent and confident readers.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in May 2016.

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' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	118849
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10227117
Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Matthew Nix
Headteacher	Duncan Garrett (Interim Headteacher)
Website	www.roseacre.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the leadership of the school has changed.
- The interim headteacher took up his post in September 2022. He was previously the deputy headteacher at the school.
- From September, there is one substantive deputy headteacher and one interim deputy headteacher.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the special educational needs coordinators, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body including the chair. She also held a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement adviser.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, talked to some pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum information in other subjects and observed some pupils reading to teaching assistants.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector spoke with leaders, staff and pupils. She looked at the single central record of recruitment checks and safeguarding records. Throughout the inspection, the inspector considered and checked the culture of safeguarding within the school.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. She talked to pupils formally and informally about their learning, what behaviour is like and whether they feel safe in school.
- The inspector considered the responses from Ofsted's online surveys for staff, pupils and parents and spoke to some parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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