

Inspection of a good school: Russell Hall Primary School

West End, Queensbury, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD13 2AW

Inspection dates:

4–5 March 2020

Outcome

Russell Hall Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and are safe. Parents also report their children are safe and happy. Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively when it occurs. There are high expectations of every pupil. As a result, behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils conduct themselves well. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. Pupils are engaged and enthusiastic. They want to do well and value their learning opportunities. This helps them to progress.

There are wide-ranging activities to support pupils in understanding the world around them. A well-developed curriculum ensures pupils understand different faiths and cultures. This is supported by visits to different places of worship. There are also regular visits from local religious leaders.

Pupils know the school's six key values well. These underpin all they do and link closely to British values. They ensure pupils are respectful and kind, including when they recognise difference. It also supports their positive attitudes to learning.

There are many leadership opportunities available to pupils. They apply for these roles in key stage 2. Many of the roles mean pupils support their peers and younger children. The roles teach them how to be empathetic and kind. They also help them to take pride in their school.

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

Reading is well taught. Phonics teaching begins when children start school. In Nursery and Reception, teachers know how well children learn their phonics by checking on their understanding. They use this information to identify where children struggle. Using this, children get extra support when they need it. This helps them to catch up quickly. As a result, a high proportion pass the phonics screening check in Year 1 and Year 2.

The school promotes a love of reading well so that pupils are enthusiastic readers. The school encourages parents to read to and with their child. The library is well stocked. Pupils have a lot of choice in books so teachers also provide guidance to help pupils choose. This ensures that books match pupils' ability level, but also match their interests. There are special events celebrating reading. These promote different types of books and authors. In turn, this encourages pupils to try a range of books.

In mathematics, there is a clear and coherent sequence of learning in place. Teachers receive appropriate support and know how to plan coherent lessons. Teachers' training is also strong which means teachers are confident in their practice. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This also helps pupils to do well in mathematics. This is the case for different ability groups.

Assessment provides pupils with the chance to show off their skills and knowledge. It also allows teachers to gauge pupils' understanding and if there are misconceptions. Assessment is regularly done in lessons so misconceptions can be addressed immediately. It also means that when pupils are ready to move on teachers can guide them appropriately. Activities are well planned and support pupils in practising their skills. They also get the chance to undertake problem-solving and investigative work in mathematics. All of this ensures pupils have a secure knowledge in mathematics. This is evident from improving standards in pupils' outcomes. In addition, pupils are highly engaged in learning.

Science is appropriately sequenced. This has been developed and improved since the start of the year. There is good coverage of the curriculum. Sequencing breaks down key learning into smaller components. This helps recall. However, staff training is still needed to ensure the sequence is well delivered. At times, staff's subject knowledge is not strong enough. Sometimes this means they overload pupils with too much information. This makes it hard for pupils to recall facts or to deepen their understanding. Leaders are aware of this and have started training for staff to make necessary improvements.

Assessment in science is not always useful. It is too basic, meaning that it does not fully showcase what pupils have learned or understood. As a result, teachers do not have enough information to plan activities which closely match pupils' needs. In general, this particularly affects the most able pupils. The activities for these pupils do not always ensure they are challenged. This inhibits their progress.

In the early years, children make a strong start to their school life. They settle quickly, which helps them to learn and thrive in the setting. There are opportunities for children to develop in all learning areas. Improvements to reading teaching means children are better prepared for key stage 1.

The wider curriculum is a strength of the school. It ensures pupils understand the world around them, including their local area. The school recently received the heritage award. This recognises the school's effective work with its community.

Staff feel valued. Leaders check how staff feel and work to reduce workload. Staff also feel they get pertinent training, which helps them do their job well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are safe in school. There are robust checks on all adults. The school works hard to support all families. Leaders liaise with external agencies to seek specialist support where necessary. There is regular training which helps staff and governors understand their responsibilities around keeping pupils safe. Checks on policies are made and updated regularly. The school works well to ensure pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, or when in their community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have ensured there is a sequence for learning in science. However, teachers' subject knowledge is still inconsistent so that the implementation of the sequence is not strong enough. Leaders need to make sure that there is clear enough guidance for teachers. Leaders need to ensure training continues for staff so that teachers do not overload pupils, which can inhibit their progress.
- Leaders have developed some systems to assess pupils in science. However, the assessment system in place does not provide teachers and leaders with clarity around what facts pupils can recall and the depth of their understanding. This means that assessment does not fully inform teachers about pupils' next steps. In particular, the most able pupils are not well stretched and challenged because of this. Leaders must ensure that teachers can use the assessment systems in place usefully, so they can provide pupils with clear next steps.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 15–16 March 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	107433
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10110808
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr David Young
Headteacher	Mrs Andrea Grist
Website	http://www.russellhallprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 March 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be disadvantaged is above average.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher and several senior and middle leaders throughout the inspection. I met with several teaching staff, office staff and kitchen staff. I also met with the chair of the governing body and the school improvement partner.
- A meeting was held with leaders who have responsibility for safeguarding. Documents around processes and policies relating to pupils' safety were also checked. I also checked records of staff recruitment and training.
- I agreed with the headteacher to carry out a review of mathematics, reading and science as part of the inspection. Together with curriculum leaders, we completed

connected inspection activities that included lesson visits, work scrutiny and discussion with leaders, pupils and teachers.

- I spoke to eight parents at the start of the school day. I considered the 42 free-text responses from parents. I considered the views of 49 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also reviewed responses from staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Fiona McNally, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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