Inspection of a good school: Rickmansworth Park Junior Mixed and Infant School

Park Road, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 1HU

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are warm, welcoming, and friendly. They love to talk to visitors and share their knowledge about a wide range of subjects. Even the youngest children are confident and self-reliant. This is due to the staff's consistent approach to ensuring pupils know the rules and routines. Moreover, pupils know they can seek help from adults whenever needed.

All pupils learn about children's rights, which are central to the school's values. They know and understand that it is important to champion their beliefs. For example, the pupils have written to their local member of parliament about the need to improve the environment locally and nationally. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong. They respect others' opinions. Pupils are positive members of the school community.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. This helps ensure that pupils behave exceptionally well. Pupils show extremely positive attitudes toward their learning, work hard, and always want to achieve their best. They achieve well in national tests and assessments.

Pupils can develop their talents and interests. This is due to the interesting clubs, visitors, and trips available. These are many and varied, but particularly support sports and music, which the school celebrates.

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

The school has a very well-developed and ambitious curriculum. This starts in the early years, where the key learning in each subject is broken down into smaller steps. This enables children to learn the basic knowledge and language that they need for future

learning. Children in Reception are well-prepared for Year 1. Older pupils learn each subject separately, but careful links between them mean pupils learn a broad, relevant body of knowledge. Pupils can confidently remember what they have learned and relate this to current issues in society. Pupils are excited to talk about all aspects of their learning. They engage in lively and interesting debates. For example, they know that tourism in some parts of the world creates jobs for people, but can hinder and challenge the local community.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. During lessons, they give clear explanations. They check what pupils have learned, adapting their teaching where necessary. Well-considered teaching approaches make sure that pupils remember and understand new knowledge. For instance, teachers introduce appropriate vocabulary, engage pupils in well-designed activities and teach pupils to share their thoughts and ideas with their peers. Teachers then successfully bring all these elements together to help pupils remember what they have learned before and integrate it into new knowledge. This approach is used consistently across the school. This helps pupils to achieve exceptionally well.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils' highly positive outcomes in reading reflect this. Pupils love to read because the school always provides books that interest them. Staff are experts in teaching reading. They make sure pupils listen well and recap sounds accurately. Pupils enjoy their sessions as staff are positive and fun. This helps pupils to stay engaged and focused. Staff make sure all pupils can keep up with reading and provide extra sessions if pupils need this. Pupils read books that carefully match their phonics knowledge. This helps them practise the sounds they are learning and become fluent readers.

Pupils behave well in the classroom and at playtimes. They are respectful and listen when others share their thoughts and views. Positive behaviour begins in the early years, where children learn to follow the rules and routines quickly. They get along well with each other and give and take well. Pupils show resilience, self-confidence, and determination when faced with new challenges.

Pupils enjoy the broad and interesting opportunities that the school provides. These complement their learning and help pupils develop a deeper understanding of the subjects they learn. The school actively develops pupils' interests. These include art, sport, and music. The school fosters pupils' physical and mental well-being. Pupils raise money for charity and show compassion for others. Pupils learn to be helpful citizens by taking on roles of responsibility around the school.

Leaders and governors work very well together. They have a shared vision and work effectively in partnership to further improve the school. The school addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection successfully, which has resulted in improved outcomes for pupils. Leaders give high priority to staff well-being. Staff appreciate and benefit from the training the school provides. The school engages well with the parents. They appreciate the support it provides for their pupil's education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good on 4 October 2018.

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	117304
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10323642
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lindsay Unsworth
Headteacher	Jane Linch
Website	www.rickmansworthpark.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2018

Information about this school

- The does not use alternative provision provider of education.

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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects, early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors 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 provided by the school, including development plans and the school's self-evaluation form.
- 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, including attendance, that puts pupils' interests first.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- The inspector spoke to some parents and considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered the online staff survey. The inspector also spoke to pupils to obtain their opinions.
- The inspector also met with representatives from the local authority and governing body including the chair of governors.

Inspection team

Jessie Linsley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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