Inspection of Rickmansworth Park Junior Mixed and Infant School

Park Road, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 1HU

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 June 2025
The quality of education	**Outstanding**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Outstanding**
Leadership and management	**Outstanding**
Early years provision	**Outstanding**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Being a pupil at Rickmansworth Park School is a joyful and enriching experience. Pupils feel happy, safe and well cared for. They typically describe their school as 'amazing' and enjoy strong, trusting relationships with staff. Systems like the 'worry box' help pupils feel heard and supported, and staff are ready to listen and respond. Pupils consistently treat each other with kindness and tolerance. They fully understand fundamental British values.

The school sets very high expectations for every pupil. These expectations are not only met, but they are exceeded. For example, pupils' achievement in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2024 was in the top few percent nationally. Pupils are proud of their accomplishments and are eager to learn, often choosing to stay in at break to finish their work.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite, focused and enthusiastic. They follow routines confidently and support each other, such as play leaders organising fun games for others. The school's culture of respect and inclusion is deeply embedded from the early years onwards.

One pupil summed it up best: 'I love it when I can have a little giggle with my teacher.' This reflects the warm and supportive environment that defines life at the school.

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

The school provides an exceptional quality of education. Expectations for all pupils are consistently high. Leaders have developed a team of expert teachers who deliver a highly ambitious and well-planned curriculum. Staff regularly reflect on and review how they can further develop their own knowledge and practice. As a result, teachers explain concepts clearly and check pupils' understanding carefully. This helps pupils to remember what they have learned and apply their knowledge confidently across subjects. For example, in Reception, children use their understanding of rhythm to create their own musical performances. Older pupils apply their geographical knowledge to explain how waterfalls form and can name the highest mountains on each continent.

Reading is a real strength across the school. Pupils are highly enthusiastic readers and enjoy regular author visits, book fairs and reading buddy sessions. The school has partnered with a local bookshop to ensure classrooms are stocked with high-quality books. In Reception and Year 1, pupils receive carefully targeted phonics teaching. Pupils who need extra help, including those new to speaking English, receive personalised support to help them catch up quickly.

Early years provision is excellent. Children in Reception enjoy stimulating learning experiences, such as building penguin homes during a topic about Antarctica. They learn to share, take turns and explore new ideas with confidence. Teachers use songs, stories and creative play to build rich vocabulary, communication and thinking skills.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported as their needs are identified diligently. They access the full curriculum and achieve just as well as their peers. Parents and carers of pupils with SEND feel listened to and supported, and staff work closely with families to meet each pupil's needs.

Behaviour across the school is highly conducive to learning. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are polite and considerate. For example, they hold doors open and greet visitors warmly. Many take on leadership roles, such as school councillors or digital leaders. At lunchtime, older pupils support younger pupils to join in games and feel included. Pupils look out for each other and care about each other's feelings.

The school offers a wealth of enrichment activities, including sports competitions, coding and street dance. These are open to all pupils, and the school ensures that disadvantaged pupils participate extensively. For example, pupils with SEND take part fully in residentials and trips to the theatre to support cultural development.

Through personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn about respect, diversity and global citizenship. They take part in environmental projects, creative workshops and charity events, helping them understand how they can make a difference to the world. The school promotes rich cultural understanding. For example, in art, pupils make Kente cloth designs and Benin head sculptures, created with support from a local secondary school. These kinds of collaborations enable pupils to be very confident about making the transition to secondary education.

Leadership at the school is strong and exceptionally supportive. Staff feel valued and well cared for. The school also works closely with families, including providing support to help with wider needs. Governors know the school well and carry out their responsibilities effectively. The local community have really bought into the school, which is reflected by the sheer number of volunteers that want to support it.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	10378470
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	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lindsay Unsworth
Headteacher	Jane Linch
Website	www.rickmansworthpark.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 April 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the vice chair.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff members.
- Inspectors conducted further meetings with staff regarding safeguarding, special educational needs provision, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and geography. For each deep dive, 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.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects and spent time in early years across the inspection. This included computing, music and PSHE.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times.
- 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 considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the confidential online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

Inspection team

James Chester, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Thrower	Ofsted Inspector

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