

Inspection of Rucstall Primary School

Holbein Close, Black Dam, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 3EX

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

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?

This is a happy and inclusive school where pupils thrive. Pupils love coming to school and are enthusiastic about their learning. Their behaviour in class and as they move around the school is exemplary. They are constantly polite and well-mannered and try to do what is right. They feel safe because of the excellent relationships between them, their peers and the adults in school.

Expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning are consistently high. The school values, which are central to the 'Rucstall way', are threaded carefully through the rich, broad curriculum. This supports all pupils to achieve their very best, regardless of whatever additional needs they may have.

The curriculum that pupils experience is aspirational. In class, pupils listen well and rise to the challenges set for them. For example, Year 6 pupils used their mathematical knowledge extremely well to cost out a holiday, so that they could decide whether the budget they were given would be enough to afford full board or just half board. They are proud of their work, especially if it is on display on the celebration wall. Pupils produce high-quality work and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

High ambition and the determination to achieve it are evident through all levels of the school's leadership. These values are reflected in the clear vision and high-quality provision that have been established in the school.

The school has designed an exceptional, well-sequenced curriculum. Across all subjects, the precise knowledge pupils need to know and remember is identified clearly. This knowledge builds in a logical and coherent sequence right from the start of Reception. This enables pupils to achieve extremely well across the whole curriculum, preparing them for their next stage in learning.

Teachers explain learning really well, supported by their subject expertise. They provide many opportunities for pupils to revisit prior knowledge, practising skills until they are learned securely. What pupils know and remember across all subjects is impressive. For example, by Year 2, pupils are able to confidently explain the difference between a numerator and a denominator in fractions. In lessons, adults actively present material, structuring it well so that pupils understand. When pupils struggle with new concepts, adults pick this up quickly using skilful questioning and 'live marking' to check understanding and provide support as required. Strong assessment practices ensure that any pupils in danger of falling behind are quickly identified and helped to keep up. Consequently, pupils achieve extremely well in national tests at the end of each key stage.

The school prioritises the teaching of reading so that pupils become confident, fluent readers. Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start in Reception. Staff

have the knowledge and skills to teach reading extremely effectively. Pupils quickly gain the strategies they need to read well. The books that pupils read match their phonics knowledge closely. Reading is encouraged via a range of successful initiatives. For example, children in Reception have a poetry basket which encourages them to retell the nursery rhymes and poems they have listened to – something that they really enjoy. Pupils are also given ambitious reading challenges to work towards.

The school is aspirational for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are rigorous systems and procedures in place to ensure early identification of need. Pupil passports are used very well to constantly review how well pupils are meeting their targets. Pupils' learning plans are ambitious. Teachers are skilful in making effective adaptations to how the curriculum is delivered when needed. This helps pupils with SEND to progress through the curriculum successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Expectations are met consistently. Pupils know and want to behave in a way that reflects the school's values, which include respectfulness, co-operation and honesty. These behaviours start from when children join the school in Reception. Children happily share with their friends and will ask if they need help. Older pupils know that they should be role models for their younger peers.

Pupils' wider development is a real strength and underpins the rest of the school's work. The knowledge to be learned has been precisely identified, covering the four areas of relationships, health and well-being, keeping safe in Rucstall and living in the wider world. Pupils learn to manage their emotions through the 'feeling characters'. Linking with the school values, these characters help pupils to learn essential skills such as resilience and perseverance. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of protected characteristics. They know that everyone is unique and differences are to be celebrated.

Governors fulfil their role extremely well. They have an accurate understanding of the school. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education at the school. They take time to talk to pupils about their school experiences, which gives them useful insights to guide their work. The school places a high priority on the professional development offer for staff, which is exceptional. Staff appreciate the support given to them.

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	116040
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10296212
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Laura Lucas
Headteacher	Ruth Griffiths
Website	www.rucstall.hants.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.

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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff, parents, pupils, the local governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some

pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- 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.
- Responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text comments were considered by the lead inspector, as were responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Becky Greenhalgh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Laura James

His Majesty's Inspector

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