

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 March 2018

Mrs Julie Dekker
Executive Headteacher
Rocklands Community Primary School
74 The Street
Rockland All Saints
Attleborough
Norfolk
NR17 1TP

Dear Mrs Dekker

Short inspection of Rocklands Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection whereby pupils develop both academically and socially. Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their evaluation of this school and feel that their children are fortunate to attend the school. This is evident in the many comments made on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Parents wrote about how the school, 'has consistently nurtured a truly excellent teaching format... for teaching life skills, manners' and has 'high expectations and aspirations' alongside 'providing pupils with such a good start in life'. One parent's view that 'teachers go above and beyond to meet the needs of pupils' was echoed by many others.

Highly focused leadership ensures that the federation with Great Ellingham Primary School benefits Rocklands' drive for improvement. The previous inspection report recommended sharing subject leadership across the federation and this has been enacted successfully. As a result, subject expertise is disseminated effectively, ensuring that pupils at Rocklands study a broad and balanced curriculum.

You provide a clear vision of success which celebrates the importance of community, resilience and inquisitiveness about the world. One pupil told me that the school really was the embodiment of its strapline, 'small school, big heart, great expectations'.

Governance at Rocklands is very effective. The governing body is led very well. Governors bring a breadth of experience to their roles, enabling the school to

develop. Governors are highly ambitious for the success of pupils and use the information they gather from regular visits and data to both challenge and commend the quality of education offered at the school.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are both kind and respectful towards each other. As a result, pupils are able to learn in a harmonious environment. They respond well to teachers' high expectations. For example, I observed pupils across all year groups demonstrating genuine support for the achievements of Reception children when they received certificates for fulfilling specific challenges in assembly. You have ensured that pupils develop strong learning behaviours such as resilience, lateral thinking and effort through weekly celebration of pupils who demonstrate these concepts. As a result, many pupils are developing key skills that will enable them to be productive, happy and fulfilled citizens of 21st century Britain.

You correctly judge the early years provision to be a strength of the school. Children make a very good start to their learning at Rocklands. Although space is limited in the school, you and your leadership team have been highly innovative in exploiting it. As a result, the indoor and outdoor spaces are both engaging and focused on developing children's physical development alongside reading, writing, mathematics and language skills. The proportion of children who make a good level of development has been consistently above the national average for the past few years.

The previous inspection report raised the importance of ensuring consistently strong teaching in every class. You and your leadership team have addressed this through ensuring that every teacher uses key data to inform their planning for each pupil. Additionally, you have enabled subject leaders to improve the teaching, learning and assessment of their respective subject areas. For example, you recognised that improvements were required in mathematics and in collaboration with the mathematics leader embedded training and the use of key resources. As a result, outcomes at key stage 2 have improved and were above the national average in 2017. However, you also acknowledge that you need to embed greater challenge in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics at both key stages so that a higher proportion of pupils make rapid progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils feel safe and well protected at Rocklands. Many pupils told me that the school was like a big family where everyone's name is known and everyone cares for each other. Pupils can define bullying and were adamant in telling me that it did not happen at Rocklands. I observed the ways in which pupils of different year groups supported each other in class very well. All Year 6 pupils, for example, take their responsibility to look after the younger pupils in the school very seriously. All parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire stated that they were confident that their children were safe at the school. Leaders, including governors, ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective. Records, including the checks on all adults who work at the school, are securely maintained. Pupils who are in need of support receive timely and appropriate assistance.

Inspection findings

- To ascertain whether the school remained good, one of my key lines of enquiry was about how the leadership team is ensuring that pupils at key stage 1 make consistently good progress in reading and mathematics. In 2016, pupils at key stage 1 achieved very slightly below the national average for reading. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading was above the national average.
- Leaders have focused well on strengthening pupils' engagement and love of reading. Building on pupils' achievements in the phonics screening check in Year 1, staff develop pupils' understanding of the ways in which authors use language for effect. As a result, pupils are able to articulate their comprehension of a range of texts very well.
- Innovative and ambitious in the way in which they use the limited space offered by the Victorian school building, leaders have created a vibrant library named 'the book nook'. Year 5 pupils take responsibility for monitoring its usage at lunchtime. I observed pupils, throughout the day, using the space to read. Pupils recognise the importance of reading and enjoy it.
- Leadership of mathematics is strong. Through regular tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress, leaders identify swiftly areas in which pupils may struggle and then provide effective support. Teaching assistants are deployed well. As a result, the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher standards was above the national average in 2016 and 2017 in key stage 1. However, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in mathematics was slightly below the national average in 2016 and 2017. Leaders are vigilant about improving pupils' outcomes and use research to improve their provision so that more pupils make rapid progress.
- I observed key stage 1 pupils effectively using mathematics resources to explore the concept of division. Staff used challenging questions to support pupils as they progressed from concrete understanding, using folded pieces of paper, to abstract understanding. The previous inspection report raised the importance of staff checking pupils' understanding regularly and I observed in many classes the ways in which staff effectively address pupils' misconceptions. As a result, pupils make good progress in all areas of the curriculum.
- My second key line of enquiry was about how effectively leaders support pupils to make rapid progress at key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher standard in all three areas was above the national average.
- Pupils are highly enthusiastic learners and ambitious to succeed. I observed key stage 2 pupils immersed in developing their understanding of different ways of using division to work out decimals. Through effective questioning and support, the teacher was able to extend pupils' reasoning skills.
- Leadership of English is strong. Ambitious for the success of pupils, leaders look beyond the confines of the school and the county to source the most effective approaches to improving pupils' reading and writing skills. As a consequence, the

school is about to embark on a more systematic approach to the teaching of writing which should result in a higher proportion of pupils making rapid progress. However, the impact is not yet evident.

- Currently, although pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, they do not make rapid progress. The school has already identified the importance of accelerating the progress of all pupils in their school development plan.
- My final line of enquiry focused on how well leaders support pupils to keep safe both at school and beyond. Pupils learn about a range of potential dangers such as traffic and fire and how to keep safe. Pupils also learn key citizenship concepts such as tolerance, empathy and communal responsibility through the curriculum.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are regularly extended and challenged so that they make rapid progress across in reading, writing and mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Aykin
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the course of this inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior and middle leaders and a group of five governors. I also met with your school improvement partner.

I spoke with pupils informally in classrooms and when walking around the school site. I also met with a group of 12 pupils.

During two tours of the school with you, I visited each class and observed pupils at work.

I undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work in their books and folders.

Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined along with the school's record of checks carried out on staff working at the school.

A range of documents were analysed or discussed, including; the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; documents relating to pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour; minutes of governors' meetings and curriculum plans.

I considered the views of 37 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the views parents expressed via free-text. I also considered the views of 12 members of staff.