

Rowdown Primary School

Calley Down Crescent, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey CR0 0EG

Inspection dates

14–15 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders have not taken robust enough action to ensure that teaching challenges the most able pupils. Consequently, few pupils work at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some pupils experience a narrow range of learning experiences. In science, pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out investigations.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to test ideas for themselves. Teachers' questions do not always make them think deeply.
- Attendance is below average, partly because some parents continue to take their children on holiday during the school term.
- The progress of children is not consistently good across the early years. This is because teaching varies and does not challenge routinely the most able children.
- Most pupils behave well, but the school is not always proactive enough in ensuring that its values are promoted and understood by all. Some unpleasant language is used by a small number of pupils.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in phonics because teaching does not develop key skills systematically or challenge the most able.

The school has the following strengths

- The support and expertise available in the trust is leading to improved teaching, leadership and governance.
- Clear explanations by their teachers and interesting resources lead to pupils being attentive and keen to do well.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school because they know adults will look after them.
- Leaders are very clear about the challenges facing vulnerable families. They use additional funding well to support pupils with social and emotional barriers to learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching so that progress is more rapid, particularly for the most able, by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently extend the pupils' thinking and set work that challenges them
 - bringing greater rigour to the teaching of phonics
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to investigate ideas themselves
 - making sure teaching in the early years identifies and challenges the most able children.
- Develop a plan for the curriculum so it is designed to meet the needs of all pupils by:
 - ensuring that the knowledge, skills and understanding of subjects are taught in sufficient depth for pupils to make good or better progress, particularly in science
 - promoting more robustly the school's values, particularly in relation to how pupils should respect each other, so eliminating the use of derogatory language.
- Maintain the drive to improve attendance by making clear to parents the importance of the regular attendance of their children and also that term-time holidays are not acceptable.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders know where teaching needs to become more effective if outcomes for pupils are to rise. While teaching is improving, they have not been successful in eliminating variability. This is partly because leaders do not always measure sharply enough the impact of actions on the progress of pupils.
- The strong focus on English and mathematics is not matched by systematic teaching of other subjects, such as science, history and geography. Plans for developing literacy and numeracy across subjects are not sharp enough.
- Subject leaders work closely together across the trust to establish common approaches. This has included sharing expertise and developing a new calculation policy in mathematics.
- Pupils benefit from a range of clubs and other activities. This includes the 'Inspire to Aspire' charity, which exists to enable gifted pupils to pursue an area of talent to further their ambitions.
- Leaders know the circumstances of families well, particularly those who might be more vulnerable. Their aim is that pupils should be given every opportunity to be successful learners. The popular breakfast club and the various nurture provisions are examples of where this aim is being met.
- Sport funding is leading to greater participation by pupils in clubs and competitions. However, sport funding is not being used well enough to sustain its impact in the future as only a small proportion is spent on training staff.
- Leaders use additional special educational needs and/or disabilities funding and the pupil premium funding well in helping pupils with social and emotional difficulties to access school and learning. The school is less effective in ensuring consistently good progress in English and mathematics for the pupils supported by these funds.
- Assemblies regularly focus on each aspect of fundamental British values, with further support through personal and social education. Pupils are taught about the customs and practices of other faiths. However, leaders and staff are not doing enough to ensure that pupils understand that racist language has no place and should not be tolerated in school or in the wider community.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body has become increasingly effective and rigorous in fulfilling its responsibilities.
- Governors are trained well, have valuable individual expertise and work closely with the academy trust board. This has enabled governors to become more incisive in their questioning of school leaders. Closer and more rigorous links with the school mean they can pick up quickly issues such as a decline in attendance this year; governors are making sure that leaders have plans to tackle this.
- The governing body has also become more robust in holding leaders to account for school performance. Governors are aware that teaching needs to become more

challenging if more pupils are to be pushed to higher levels.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have developed a culture in which the welfare of all pupils is understood to be of paramount importance. They ensure that members of staff know the issues facing vulnerable families and their children. This includes keeping a watchful eye on protecting pupils from radicalisation. There are systematic procedures in place for identifying and reporting concerns. The school also makes sure that pupils know how to identify dangers and keep themselves safe.
- The school works closely with other agencies for the welfare of the pupils, including those who might have gone missing. Leaders swiftly follow up unexplained absence, such as when parents take their children on holiday without notification. Effective support for children looked after is greatly valued by carers.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching does not always expect enough of the pupils, particularly those capable of higher attainment. Teachers do not always use their assessment of pupils sharply enough to identify starting points for their learning. This leads to missed opportunities to extend thinking and learning, particularly for the most able.
- Pupils at times sit through long explanations of skills they have already mastered. They do not often have opportunities to plan and investigate ideas themselves. Questioning by teachers does not always challenge their thinking enough or develop their reasoning skills.
- A lack of challenge, particularly for the most able, extends to phonics teaching. Phonics teaching is not sufficiently systematic and does not move learning forward rapidly enough. Several pupils spend time going over what they can already do.
- Typically, teaching across the school takes place in calm classes where behaviour is managed well. Learning is unhindered by disturbances and misbehaviour is rare.
- The most effective teaching is based on clear explanations from teachers, so pupils know precisely what they are learning; teaching guides pupils carefully through tasks so that they can engage fully. Teachers sometimes provide interesting activities that grab the pupils' interests, such as when they investigated puzzles in mathematics in several year groups.
- Pupils say they find the feedback teachers provide helpful, particularly in writing. They know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils regularly respond by editing their work, checking spellings and making their writing more adventurous.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils have few opportunities to learn how to take responsibility. The school council is not an effective forum for representing others or making a significant contribution to school life. Pupils are keen to become more involved and value the opportunity of showing newcomers and visitors around the school.
- Pupils say they understand that bullying and derogatory language are hurtful and should not be tolerated. They report that both occur but are generally dealt with and resolved swiftly. School records also show several incidents of racist language, all of which were addressed, which supports the pupils' views.
- Pupils learn about e-safety and how to stay safe, including when they use social media as they get older. Theatre groups work with Year 6 pupils, helping them learn about the danger of slipping into gangs.
- Pupils are confident and positive about school. They are keen to learn and happily share discussions and activities. However, pupils are not always confident to try ideas out for themselves and can be dependent on adults if they get stuck.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders reacted swiftly to a decline in attendance earlier this year. They instigated robust action to reward high attendance and rigorous procedures to chase up absence. This has led to improvements, but attendance for the year remains below average and persistent absence is above average.
- Pupils generally move sensibly around the school and play happily together outside. They are usually polite and considerate towards others and show respect to adults. Pupils understand they should be tolerant of others and not to become aggressive when things go wrong.
- Pupils are attentive in lessons and respond quickly to the requests of their teachers. Behaviour in lessons is generally calm and positive. Pupils are usually considerate towards each other and happy to help each other.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress across the school. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils. Consequently, relatively few pupils exceed expectations for their age across the school. This was particularly evident in national curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2016.
- As teaching improves, so does the pupils' progress. Attainment is rising, with more pupils than previously working at higher standards. This is more so in mathematics

than in reading and writing.

- Pupils do not make sufficient progress in phonics. Consequently, attainment is below average by the end of Year 1. This includes disadvantaged pupils. Even the most able readers in key stage 1 are hesitant in using their skills and do not always use punctuation to bring greater fluency to their reading.
- The pupils' writing is becoming creative as they gain the confidence to use ambitious vocabulary. They write neatly and apply skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling to make their writing accurate. Some pupils have the stamina to write at length, such as when Year 6 wrote an interesting and imaginative 'chapter' story over several days.
- Pupils develop accuracy when calculating. They deepen their understanding of new ideas by applying the skills they learn to solve problems, but are less secure in explaining their reasoning.
- Progress varies considerably in other subjects. This is particularly the case in science, where pupils have relatively few opportunities to plan and undertake investigations.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, is also not consistently strong enough. This means attainment differences with other pupils nationally remain. This is largely because teaching overall requires improvement.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities varies and is not consistently good. Progress for some with significant needs is more marked, with clear evidence that they are taking the steps needed to meet their goals.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Attainment has been below average by the end of Reception in most areas of learning. Action taken to improve teaching is beginning to have an impact on the children's progress and their attainment is starting to rise. This includes for boys, who previously had not been performing as well as girls. However, a significant minority of children are not suitably prepared for key stage 1.
- The school has identified that many children enter the early years with limited speaking skills. A programme is in place to tackle the severest difficulties. This shows some success. However, adults in both classes do not always interact with children at other times to extend their speaking and vocabulary.
- The school has also identified the limited social skills of many children as a further barrier to their learning. Leaders have introduced a wide range of programmes to tackle this. The success of this work can be seen in the way children enjoy attending school and have established constructive relationships with each other and with adults.
- The curriculum provided is not always adapted to compensate for gaps in learning identified by the staff team. Leadership has placed a greater emphasis on assessing the children's progress, but this does not always translate into identifying clearly a child's learning in a particular activity in relation to their own starting point. This means that the most able children are not challenged enough to extend their learning.
- Inside, classrooms are generally full of enticing activities that attract the children and hold their attention. The outside areas are less stimulating and do not always support the learning that takes place inside. There are few opportunities for activities outside to

support the children's literacy and numeracy.

- Children feel safe and happy in the early years. They know the adults will take care of them if there is a problem. Relationships with parents and carers are positive and enable the constructive sharing of information.

School details

Unique reference number	140841
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10031687

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair of the board of trustees	RoseAnne Ellis
Chair of the local governing body	Stuart Bailey
Executive headteacher	Ros Sandell
Headteacher	Linda Shute
Telephone number	01689 843367
Website	www.rowdown.croydon.sch.uk/
Email address	linda.shute@rowdown.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-size primary school.
- The school joined the Fairchildes Academy Community Trust in June 2014. The school is led by the trust executive headteacher and its own headteacher. It has its own local governing body.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A significant minority are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The majority of pupils are supported by additional government funding.
- Children in the early years provision attend the Nursery part time and the two

Reception classes full time.

- The school provides childcare before school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 28 lessons. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors to two of these. They looked at work in pupils' books, and listened to key stage 1 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, three governors, including the chair, and the chair of the academy trust board.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses to Parent View and written contributions from six parents. Inspectors also took account of 81 replies to a survey of parents carried out by the school last term. Inspectors also talked with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the day and to others who attended a transition meeting.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records related to behaviour and attendance, and documents related to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lou Anderson	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moller	Ofsted Inspector

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