

Inspection of Red Gates School

Farnborough Avenue, South Croydon Surrey CR2 8HD

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
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?

The school strives to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to become the very best version of themselves. Individuality and diversity are celebrated. Pupils and staff are part of a thriving and cohesive team. Pupils enjoy coming here and parents and carers strongly recommend the school.

The curriculum and the way it is delivered are highly ambitious and carefully adapted for the individual needs of the pupils. Pupils enjoy learning a wide range of subjects. They take part in lessons which are well matched to their needs. As a result, pupils are ready for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour is very positive. Pupils are kind. Inside and outside of lessons, pupils engage constructively with the whole school community. The school is constantly working to continue to improve the attendance of pupils because it knows the importance of them coming to school each day. Pupils feel safe and are kept safe at the school.

Pupils thrive here. There is a strong personal development offer at the school. Pupils take part in a wide range of clubs that are closely matched to their interests. Pupils speak positively about the opportunities available to them, including their interactions with the school therapy dog and the educational visits. Leaders also make sure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.

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

The school curriculum is broad and ambitious. It helps to prepare pupils exceptionally well for the next stage of their education.

Communication and reading sit at the heart of the curriculum. Through a well-planned and implemented phonics programme, the school provides excellent support to pupils with learning to read. Staff use careful checks of pupils' learning to quickly identify any gaps in their knowledge. Teachers then put in place appropriately targeted extra help for pupils who need it to catch up. Staff get the training that they need to teach well and support pupils effectively. Pupils say that they enjoy reading.

The school places great emphasis on supporting pupils to develop their communication in different day-to-day situations and contexts. There is a strong school-wide approach to communication that centres around both talking and the use of signs, photos and symbols. These communication approaches enable pupils' voices to be heard and their views to be taken into account. For instance, pupils are able to comment on learning, ask questions and discuss their feelings. The school works with experts and other agencies to ensure that its approaches to promoting pupils' communication are successful.

There is a clear plan for learning for all from the start of the Reception Year. Leaders have consulted with their wider stakeholders to ensure that the curriculum fully meets the needs of the children that attend. The curriculum is rich and coherent and encompasses all areas of learning. The knowledge and skills that children in the early years learn

increases with complexity as they progress through the year. For example, in expressive arts and design, children begin by exploring basic actions, such as rolling, squeezing, shaking and then practise what they have learned through a range of art activities. Teachers make the right adaptations to support the interests and needs of children and ensure that they learn very well.

Staff use assessment expertly to check that the curriculum is having the intended impact on how well pupils learn. Through these checks, teachers identify when further support is needed. They then put successful adaptations in place to support pupils' learning of the curriculum and their overall development.

Children's needs are carefully identified when they join the school and then throughout the Reception Year. As a result, appropriate learning is put in place to support their development. From Year 1, pupils follow one of three different learning pathways. All curriculum pathways are ambitious and follow the same core themes. These pathways are planned and taught in a way that supports pupils to learn exceptionally well and be ready for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour in the school strongly supports learning. In a large part, this is because leaders and staff know the pupils very well. The school uses a range of effective strategies to help pupils to manage their behaviour and, therefore, successfully focus on and enjoy their learning. Leaders want to make sure that pupils are able to attend school every day. They know that pupils' attendance at school is both critical to their learning and their safeguarding. The school works closely and sensitively with parents and with external partners to promote high attendance. For example, staff have worked with individual pupils to help them to overcome phobias of wearing seatbelts.

Supporting the personal development of pupils runs throughout all that happens at the school. Pupils enjoy taking part in community events and local festivals, such as singing carols at the nearby shopping centre. The school offers pupils a wide range of clubs. These are well attended and help to further develop pupils' character. Pupils especially appreciate the opportunity to take part in activities involving gardening and horse riding. Pupils have adults that they can talk to if they have worries. They learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Staff appreciate the work that leaders do to develop them professionally and support their well-being.

The governing body has developed extensively since the last inspection. It provides strong support and guidance to the school.

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	101855
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10323298
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Janet Nelms
Headteacher	Melissa Hendry
Website	https://redgates.croydon.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	28 February and 1 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a special school for pupils between the ages of 4 and 11 years.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school caters for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Many have a diagnosis of autism.
- The school does not currently 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 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication, early reading, mathematics and personal, social and health education. 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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.
- Through meeting with parents, staff and pupils and by reviewing the Ofsted surveys, their wider views of the school were taken into account.

Inspection team

Luke Stubbles, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Joanna Tarrant

Ofsted Inspector

Lascelles Haughton

His Majesty’s Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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