

Inspection of Knollmead Primary School

Knollmead, Tolworth, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 9QP

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 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

The headteacher of this school is David Tan. This school is part of Coombe Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Esther Brooks, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Emma Thomas.

What is it like to attend this school?

Knollmead Primary School provides an exceptional education for all its pupils. Inclusion and ambition are central to its ethos, and promoted by everyone in this close-knit community. The school's curriculum is rich and ambitious. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is exemplary, including in the well-regarded specially resourced provisions for pupils with SEND.

Pupils are proud to attend their school. Staff form very strong relationships with pupils and give them a distinct voice in school life. There is a sharp focus on discussion in lessons. This means pupils develop confidence and can talk about their learning and how it connects to what they have learned before.

Pupils make exceptional progress through the curriculum, from the early years to the end of Year 6. The school's published outcomes in reading and mathematics are particularly high for pupils who attain at greater depth.

Pupils are very well supported by the school to develop more widely. They feel happy and safe. Staff encourage pupils to be responsible and caring citizens. For example, pupils can support elderly people in the local area or take on positions of responsibility in school, such as organising lunchtime clubs for younger pupils.

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

The well-designed school curriculum builds up pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Leaders have thought carefully about the key knowledge they want pupils to learn and the order in which they should learn it. For example, in the early years, staff teach children to practise number skills and learn mathematical language. This develops throughout the years, and pupils apply their knowledge successfully to more complex problem-solving.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They present information clearly. Teachers make sure that pupils have secure foundations before moving on to new learning. As a result, pupils become independent and resilient learners. For example, pupils talk with confidence about how 'making mistakes' means they can improve. Teachers check pupils' understanding carefully and correct any misconceptions quickly. Teachers use information well to consider the impact of their teaching and address any gaps in pupils' learning.

Teachers and support staff have the knowledge and skills needed to help pupils with SEND, or those who are new to learning English, to excel. The teaching in the early years is both supportive and challenging. Children build their language and communication skills as well as their social and emotional development. For example, they learn to take turns, develop friendships and work and play with other children.

The school places great emphasis on early reading. From the start of Reception, pupils learn to read using phonics. Pupils at the early stages of reading develop the phonics knowledge and skills they need to read with fluency. Teachers make sure that pupils read

books that match the sounds they know. They identify pupils who are not as confident and put in place a range of appropriate and very targeted support. This means pupils, including those with SEND, become confident and enthusiastic readers. Pupils read a diverse range of challenging texts as they move through the year groups. In addition, teachers introduce pupils to a rich vocabulary from the early years and throughout the school. This language-rich environment enables pupils to thrive.

The school has a sharp focus on raising pupils' attendance rates. As a result, attendance has improved steadily. Leaders work very closely with families and external agencies to develop pupils' positive habits of regular attendance. This is having a very positive impact.

The school has designed an exceptionally rich and age-appropriate programme for pupils' personal development. Teachers teach pupils to respect difference in the world. Pupils value learning about the importance of tolerance and democracy. Pupils also appreciate how the school pushes them to achieve their personal best. They learn how to stay safe, including when online, and how to look after their physical and mental health. Pupils visit a wide range of interesting places, such as local businesses, museums and the Houses of Parliament. They talk enthusiastically about how such visits help them in their learning.

Staff are happy and very proud to work at Knollmead. They appreciate the huge efforts leaders make to develop them professionally and promote their well-being. Trustees and governors support leaders while holding them to account for the quality of education at the school. They take their duties seriously. Parents and carers are exceptionally positive about the school and the caring ethos it promotes. Comments made in the online survey, such as 'Every morning my child is happy and excited to go to school,' reflect the views of many.

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	140667
Local authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	10371153
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	238
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Emma Thomas
CEO of the trust	Esther Brooks
Headteacher	David Tan
Website	www.knollmeadprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has two specially resourced provisions for pupils with SEND, which cater specifically for pupils with hearing impairments (HIP), and pupils with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). There are currently 11 pupils educated in the HIP provision and 19 educated in the ASD provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision providers.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

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.
- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design and technology 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 some other subjects, including music and Latin.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body and the trust, including the CEO.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Susan Maguire, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Helen Rai

Ofsted Inspector

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