

Inspection of Roger De Clare First CofE School

Station Road, Puckeridge, Ware, Hertfordshire SG11 1TF

Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at school because they feel cared for and safe. There are warm, welcoming relationships between staff and pupils. At playtimes, pupils enjoy being active. They play and socialise with each other well. Pupils trust adults to help them if they get hurt or have any worries.

The 'Roger de Clare Way' sets out how pupils should behave. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are polite, considerate and kind to each other. Pupils strive to achieve 'PAWS' for showing positive behaviour, academic achievement, working together and sportsmanship. Achievements are celebrated in weekly assemblies, which pupils look forward to.

Pupils value their daily collective worship. They say that quiet reflection time helps them feel peaceful and calm. They learn about resilience and working hard. They understand the importance of trying your best and not giving up. Pupils aspire to be archaeologists or scientists. They know they must work hard to achieve these ambitions.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils engage with all aspects of the curriculum enthusiastically. They are eager to share what they have learned. For example, Nursery children showed inspectors how to hold scissors safely when moving around the classroom.

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

The school's work to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection has been quick and effective. The updated curriculum is broad and ambitious. The important knowledge pupils should learn and remember is clearly planned and well sequenced. There are systems in place to check what pupils know and understand. This helps teachers identify gaps quickly. However, the effectiveness of the delivery of the curriculum varies in a few classes. Where this is the case, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

The school has made reading a high priority. Children begin their reading journey while they are in Nursery. They learn that letters represent sounds and can recognise letters in the environment. Staff teach the phonics programme with skill and expertise. They identify pupils at risk of falling behind and take quick action to help them catch up. Pupils read books that precisely match their phonics knowledge. They enjoy using their new library to choose books to read at home with their families.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a great start to their education. They know the school routines very well. Adults build positive and caring relationships with children and their families. The well-thought-out provision in the early years promotes learning effectively. Children cooperate and share. They persevere with tasks and work together to problem-solve. Adults actively engage in

children's play. They use ambitious vocabulary which children listen to and repeat. This builds up children's language and social skills. They are well prepared for Year 1.

There is an inclusive culture at the school. The school wants the best for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The needs of pupils with SEND are accurately identified. The school works closely with other agencies to secure support for their pupils. In a few classes, adaptations are not precise enough to address pupils' barriers to learning. Where this is the case, some pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they could.

The strong personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils' well-being and wider development. Pupils learn about tolerance, diversity and equality. They have a good understanding of different religions and views. They talk about their feelings in an age-appropriate way and know what it is to be a good friend. Pupils learn how to stay safe walking to school and when using the internet. The school offers clubs that match pupils' interests. Pupils are proud to take on responsibilities, such as helping in the lunch hall. The school has close links with the local community. These provide opportunities for pupils to develop their interests, for example playing tennis at the local club.

Pupils behave well at social times. Their conduct around the school is orderly. Occasionally, in lessons, a few pupils get distracted. Adults do not always address this quickly enough. The school encourages good attendance and punctuality. Where necessary, it takes action to work with families to improve pupils' attendance. This work is having a positive impact.

Staff and governors work well together. Everyone is committed to giving pupils the best education. Governors understand the school's strengths and priorities. They provide effective support and challenge to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The delivery of the curriculum is not yet consistent across all classes. Consequently, some pupils do not develop sufficient depth in their knowledge and skills. The school must continue to develop teacher expertise to implement the curriculum effectively.
- In a few classes, adaptations that are in place to support pupils with SEND are not precise enough. This means some of these pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as they should. The school must ensure that staff receive training and

support so they are able to provide highly effective adaptations for pupils with SEND.

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	117406
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10318589
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Phillip Lucas
Headteacher	Laura Woods
Website	www.rogerdeclare.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has Nursery provision catering for 3-year-olds.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The most recent inspection of the school's religious character, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, was carried out in November 2017. The next section 48 inspection is due within eight years.

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 the 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils, and parents and

carers; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, design technology and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at work in pupils' books. Inspectors also heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. They also spoke to subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders and teachers to talk about the curriculum, workload, and the behaviour and personal development of pupils. They also met with groups of pupils to talk about learning and well-being and to hear about their views of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with governors, including the chair of governors. A separate discussion was held with the local authority school improvement partner and the deputy director of education at the Diocese of St Albans.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement and minutes of meetings of the local governing board.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils during lessons, around the school, in the lunch hall and in the playground. Inspectors looked at behaviour and attendance records and considered leaders' analyses of these.
- Inspectors considered the 47 responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, including 19 free-text comments. They also considered the 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and the 46 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Karen Stanton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Fykin	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Rockey	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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