

The Roche School

11 Frogmore, Wandsworth, London SW18 1HW

Inspection dates

27 February–5 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, proprietors and staff have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong leadership and are supported well by the senior leadership team.
- Leaders ensure that effective safeguarding systems are understood and used appropriately by staff. Pupils are kept safe at school and they feel well cared for. The majority of parents and carers are happy with the school.
- Leaders ensure that the school is warm, welcoming and inclusive. It provides equal opportunities for all pupils to be successful learners.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that there is no bullying; teachers respond swiftly to any minor behaviour incidents. Pupils attend well and enjoy coming to school. They are polite and respectful.
- Pupils are taught a range of subjects as part of an interesting, stimulating curriculum. Art, sports, music and technology are particular strengths within the broad curriculum on offer.
- Teaching in key stages 1 and 2 is good and leads to strong pupil outcomes. Occasionally, teachers do not adhere to their policy to give pupils clear guidance on their work to help them make the very best progress.
- The advisory board are committed to providing the best possible education for pupils. However, they do not consistently offer the support or challenge to leaders necessary to move the school forward.
- The early years provision requires improvement. There is inconsistent quality of leadership and teaching in this phase of the school, which leads to variability in children's outcomes.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the capacity of the leadership team, by:
 - strengthening the role of the advisory board in supporting leaders and holding them to account for all aspects of the school's work
 - further developing the role of the middle leaders in supporting teachers to provide effective guidance to improve the achievement of all pupils across all phases of the school.
- Ensure that the quality of the early years provision is consistently effective, by sharing good practice across the Nursery and Reception classes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The leadership structure has significantly changed since the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well together. They have a sharp understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further and they motivate other leaders who share their vision and high expectations for pupils. As a result, staff and pupils are proud of their school and standards achieved by pupils are high.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities which are helping them to become tolerant and thoughtful British citizens. For example, they take part in a range of charity events in the local community. They learn about festivals celebrated by different faiths and they visit various places of worship. Pupils are proud that the school won an environmental award for sustainable travel. They contribute enthusiastically to the school magazine.
- Leaders use aspects of the national curriculum but tailor it to meet the school's needs. The curriculum interests and inspires pupils. Sports provision is strong and pupils enjoy competing in sporting events with other local schools. They also enjoy performing in the three school choirs. Music is another strong feature of the curriculum. The high-quality art displays around the school show that pupils benefit from a rich art curriculum. Strong specialist teaching helps pupils to make good progress in design and technology.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and primary phase leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching across the school. Leaders recognise that this is not yet a consistent strength across the leadership team and are therefore supporting all subject leaders well to develop these skills.
- Many parents speak highly about the school's work. Any complaints are dealt with appropriately by leaders.
- Funding for pupils with education, health and care plans is spent well so that staff ensure pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. However, leaders' oversight and evaluation of this aspect of the school's work lacks clarity, organisation and precision.
- Leaders track the progress and attainment of pupils in the primary phase rigorously and accurately. However, their tracking of outcomes and progress across the early years provision is weak. This is because of the lack of consistency between systems and structures across the Nursery and the Reception classes. At the time of the inspection, leaders had no information about the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year in 2017. Therefore, leaders had little understanding that the outcomes were below those seen nationally.

Governance

- The proprietors are highly committed to providing a good standard of education for their pupils. They trust and value the headteacher and other leaders and have confidence that they will continue to improve the school.

- The two proprietors have recently been joined by a third governor to create an advisory board. The aim of the board is to strengthen the support and challenge offered to leaders. However, this work is very new and has yet to have an impact. The school's safeguarding leaders are effective and ensure that the proprietors meet their statutory duties. However, the proprietors do not routinely or rigorously monitor the work of leaders. For example, key information such as the checks which proprietors make on the records relating to safe recruitment of staff is not recorded. Similarly, proprietors do not check information held when pupils leave the school to ensure that their leaders have met all current requirements. While all this information is thorough and well organised, leaders agree that they would benefit from knowing that those they are accountable to have checked their work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Designated safeguarding leaders are rigorous in their approach to safeguarding pupils. They have an incisive understanding of any vulnerable pupils in their care. They are relentless in their work to ensure that pupils receive support from external services when necessary. They seek appropriate advice and support from the local authority.
- Staff receive up-to-date, relevant safeguarding training to help them understand signs of abuse or radicalisation. They adhere to the school's safeguarding referral system.
- Appropriate checks are made to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Robust systems are in place for checking and supervising visitors to the school.
- The school site is safe and secure and leaders respond quickly when minor adjustments to the building are needed in order to maintain safety.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and the majority of parents who shared their views with inspectors also felt confident that their children are safe.
- Proprietors do not systematically or regularly monitor the work of the designated safeguarding leaders.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers offer a curriculum that enables pupils to make good progress from starting points which are broadly above those seen nationally. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who develop positive attitudes to learning.
- The strongest teaching in the school is seen in upper key stage 2. Enthusiastic, fun-filled teaching and secure subject knowledge lead to pupils' very strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers know pupils extremely well and target their teaching appropriately and highly effectively. This leads to high standards by the end of Year 6. Typical of the excellent teaching seen was a problem-solving lesson with the oldest pupils in the school. Pupils were grappling with a range of interesting problems; teachers used skilful, incisive questioning to help pupils think deeply, reason and philosophise. Pupils demonstrated a love of learning and debate. They were reaching levels of sophistication in their thinking which were well above those seen typically in the primary phase.
- Teachers ensure that pupils become confident readers who read widely and often and

make good progress. The beautiful library inspires pupils to read and carefully targeted intervention sessions help pupils who are at risk of underachieving to catch up. Reading is promoted well across all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy reading the school magazine which they contribute to. The school community dressed up and celebrated World Book Day with great enthusiasm during the inspection.

- Teachers develop pupils' knowledge and skills well in a range of subjects in addition to reading, writing and mathematics, including music, science, art, and design and technology.
- Teachers across the primary phase plan interesting lessons for pupils, which leads to good progress overall. However, sometimes lessons review and revise learning which pupils are already secure with. As a result, progress for the most able pupils is not as strong as it could be. For example, phonics sessions occasionally revise letters and sounds that pupils already know and can use in their reading and writing. Teachers sometimes fail to recognise this and therefore do not stretch pupils' learning further.
- Sometimes, in mathematics lessons pupils are given multiple worksheets which repeat content that they are already secure with. They therefore do not make the strong progress and reach the higher standards of which they are capable. Occasionally, teachers do not pick up on errors or misconceptions swiftly enough. This means that the guidance they give at the point of learning is not as sharp or effective as it could be. In some instances, the least able pupils are not consistently given the help they need to make even better progress.
- There is a lack of consistency in applying the school's policy on giving pupils sharp verbal guidance during lessons and written guidance in books. This does not consistently benefit pupils as it is sometimes not appropriate to their age or needs. Pupils are not consistently given opportunities to respond to written guidance when it is given, and therefore do not fully benefit from it.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are successful, confident learners. Staff ensure that pupils have high expectations of themselves and this has a positive impact on their self-esteem.
- Leaders are highly committed to ensuring equality of opportunity. They value and use pupils' views via the school council to improve the school.
- Pupils are committed to helping people who are less fortunate than themselves and are enthusiastic about the charity work they undertake. They care about issues beyond the school such as environmental dilemmas. They have a tolerant, kind approach to people who have different beliefs, families or cultures to their own.
- Teachers and leaders ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe within and beyond school, including online.
- Pupils generally take pride in their achievements but do not always take pride in their work by presenting it well, particularly in mathematics books.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils state confidently that there is no bullying in the school or any discriminatory behaviour. They are clear that adults would take appropriate action if there was any poor behaviour. Pupils play and learn well together.
- There is some unfocused behaviour in lessons when teachers fail to pick up on misconceptions or when pupils do not receive effective guidance. However, pupils are quick to refocus when challenged. They work hard and try their best.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils are successful in securing a place at the secondary school of their choice and teaching equips them well for the move.
- In 2017, pupils at the end of Year 6 achieved standards that were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's own information about pupils' attainment shows that the majority of pupils from Years 1 to 6 who are currently at the school are working at standards which are at least at the expected level for their age in reading, writing, phonics and mathematics. Many pupils across the school are working at standards which exceed those expected for their age group.
- Pupils' books and information gathered by phase leaders show that most pupils across the primary phase are making at least good progress in their learning. The most able pupils do not consistently make the progress they could. This is because teaching does not stretch, guide or challenge them to do so.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress because teaching meets their needs.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement because there is a lack of strong leadership across this phase of the school's work. There are several leaders within this phase but there is a lack of consistency and quality of leadership between them. Leaders do not routinely evaluate the progress children make from entry to the provision to when they leave it. Leaders in the Nursery are currently developing an effective system for doing this, but it is not yet embedded across the whole phase.
- Leaders do not have a sharp understanding of how outcomes at the end of the early years foundation stage compare with national averages. For example, in 2017 the proportion of children achieving a good overall level of development at the end of the Reception Year was below the national average. Leaders responsible for this phase lack a clear understanding of what this information means or how it could impact on their plans for school improvement.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is consistently strong teaching across the early

years. Teaching is variable and often not based on a fine-tuned understanding of where children are in their learning. This is most evident in the Reception classes, where children are given tasks and challenges which are sometimes well beyond their developmental level. For example, children who are at the very earliest stages of recognising that letters represent sounds and those who are beginning to explore pre-writing skills such as mark-making are given tasks which require them to have an accomplished pencil grip and to understand the idea of 'spacing' in a sentence. This fails to meet their needs and does not help them to make progress in their early writing skills.

- Typical of the strongest teaching seen in the early years are sessions in the Nursery class where practitioners skilfully move children forward in their learning. For example, during one session a practitioner developed children's understanding of book conventions and stories through sharing high-quality children's books with them and guiding them with skilful questioning and prompts.
- The learning environment in the early years reflects all the areas of learning within the early years foundation stage. Staff do very well in managing the limited space in the outdoor provision. Children benefit from a range of purposeful activities inside and outside the classrooms. However, role play areas do not consistently entice children in to play and to learn. Occasionally, posters and print displayed in these areas contains text which is well above the reading level of the children. Writing areas are sometimes uninspiring, with very few writing resources to enthuse young learners.
- Children in the Reception classes are making variable progress.
- Activities in the Nursery class draw children in because they are interesting, engaging and exciting. As a result, the children in Nursery are enthusiastic about their learning and children who are currently in the Nursery class are making good progress.
- Children are safe and happy within the early years and they develop trusting bonds with adults. They behave very well. Expectations for good behaviour are made very clear by staff and are adhered to by children.
- Leaders ensure that the school meets the independent school standards in relation to early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	101075
DfE registration number	212/6351
Inspection number	10035776

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	The Roche School Ltd
Chair	Mr J Roche
Headteacher	Ms V Adams
Annual fees (day pupils)	£13,170
Telephone number	020 8877 0823
Website	www.therocheschool.com
Email address	office@therocheschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–15 May 2014

Information about this school

- The Roche School is a non-selective, independent primary school for boys and girls aged from two to 11 years.
- The school opened in 1983 and moved to Wandsworth in South West London in 1988. The early years provision comprises one Nursery class and two Reception classes. There are 300 pupils on roll.
- The school has two sites. The main school is at Frogmore, with an additional leased building at Hilden House.
- There are a wide variety of faiths and ethnicities represented in the school. Many pupils

speaking English as an additional language, with a total of 14 different languages being spoken.

- There are currently 47 pupils at the school who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The school was last inspected in May 2014.

Information about this inspection

- Due to adverse weather conditions, inspectors were unable to complete the inspection in two consecutive days. Leaders agreed to extend the timescale for the completion of the inspection on 5 March.
- Inspectors observed learning in all classes except Year 3 and reviewed pupils' work from all year groups across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and the proprietors. Discussions took place with some parents, and 152 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were reviewed. Inspectors considered 43 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors heard a sample of pupils read, and discussions took place with pupils about their work and their views of the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, attendance data, behaviour logs and health and safety audits. Inspectors also scrutinised policy documents, including curriculum and assessment information and the school's own progress data. They also considered safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed pupils' conduct around the school, and at break and lunchtimes. Pupils took inspectors on a 'curriculum tour' of the school.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Neil Harvey

Ofsted Inspector

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