

Ramillies Hall School

A summary of the positive findings taken from the OFSTED Report 2016.

The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils are proud of their school, form good relationships with staff and value their education. Their behaviour is good.
- Pupils are cared for well. They feel safe in the school and attend regularly.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and teaching assistants support pupils well in their learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management on teaching and pupils' progress by:

- continuing to embed the most recent current actions taken to raise standards across the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The care and protection of pupils are very high priorities for all staff within the school. Staff are all trained appropriately in child protection and know what steps to take to protect pupils if they identify any concerns. Leaders have ensured that all staff have been trained to recognise the signs of radicalisation and child sexual exploitation and understand how to take prompt action to report it. Staff are alert to any risks and act swiftly to pass on any concerns they may have. Record-keeping and actions taken when issues arise are appropriate. Pupils trust members of staff because relationships within the school are strong. The school provides high-quality safeguarding information and guidance to pupils through planned curriculum time and assemblies. Safer recruitment practices are used when appointing new members of staff. There are strong systems in place to make sure that staff and visitors are vetted to be able to work with pupils. In this respect, proprietors fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- The curriculum is balanced and provides a range of opportunities for pupils. It is designed to meet the needs of each individual pupil. Pupils are assessed on entry and their prior learning is established. Leaders tailor the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. The school endeavours to focus on pupils' strengths and interests to enable all pupils to achieve according to their potential. However, the curriculum does not provide sufficient careers education for pupils.
- The new headteacher has made a strong impact on staff and pupils since her arrival. She has started to improve ineffective systems and raise standards. She has invested heavily in ensuring that all staff are knowledgeable and effective in safeguarding pupils. An appropriate safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. Staff are well trained and alert to the dangers and risks that young people face. For example, they have attended 'Prevent' training to help them to identify pupils who may be at risk of being radicalised.
- Trips and visits play a valuable role within the timetable, developing pupils' personal and social development. Some provide a clear academic focus to the curriculum. For example, Year 7 pupils walked to the local shops to further extend their social skills, and build their confidence in personal shopping and handling money. This opportunity ensured that pupils were able to further develop their mathematical and life skills.
- Pupils are provided with extra-curricular opportunities to further enhance their social skills and build confidence in their abilities. For example, participation in after-school rugby and football is encouraged to further enhance pupils' health and fitness.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- The small class sizes allow teachers and teaching assistants to recognise pupils' talents and target individual support for pupils.
- Inspectors saw pockets of good practice in teaching and learning across the school, for example in design technology, catering and English.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and are very committed to doing the best for their pupils.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and respectful, and the great majority of pupils want to learn.

- Teaching assistants provide helpful support to pupils so that they are able to improve their understanding in lessons. This is because they are provided with clear guidance from the SENCo and subject teachers.
- Teachers know how to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities because the SENCo provides clear guidance on how to remove the barriers that are preventing pupils from learning. Recent training provided all teachers with support on how to plan effectively for pupils' progress.
- The SENCo ensures that effective programmes of support are provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The welfare of pupils is a high priority for leaders. They monitor pupils' behaviour and attendance, and act swiftly on any concerns. Pupils describe how they are well cared for, that they feel safe and are sure about which member of staff to go to if they have a concern. They report that any concerns are well managed by the school. There are clear systems to support pupils who are struggling with individual matters that affect them.
- The school has established effective partnerships with a range of external specialists, including speech and language therapists, an educational psychologist, an occupational therapist and an experienced practitioner for pupils who have autism spectrum conditions. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with good tailored support that matches their needs and requirements.
- The school is committed to providing pupils with reflection opportunities and promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils through a well-planned assembly programme. For example, during the inspection pupils reflected on the morality of a terrorist attack and thought about the effects of hatred and discrimination on the world.
- Leaders ensure that personal, social, health education, citizenship and religious education are woven together and delivered through a well-planned community curriculum. Leaders liaise with a variety of external providers to ensure that the curriculum delivers important and up-to-date information. For example, the young people's drugs and alcohol service, 'MOSAIC', provides expert advice to pupils about issues such

as drugs and substance abuse. As a result, pupils speak confidently about their understanding of different risks.

- The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop socially and emotionally, and as responsible individuals. For example, pupils are able to experience leadership positions as prefects, school council representatives and head boy and girl. The head boy and head girl explained to inspectors their clear understanding of democracy and the rule of law through their own election experiences.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding and safety are clearly signposted around the school for staff and pupils. Posters are helpfully used to direct pupils to the right members of staff. For example, clear posters are displayed alerting pupils to the first aiders in school and to what to do in an emergency.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding has paramount importance in the school. Leaders work hard with pupils, staff, parents and external agencies to develop effective lines of regular communication and ensure that any concerns about pupils are fully followed up.
- Pupils say they feel very safe because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. They have a clear understanding of the different forms of bullying. Pupils told inspectors that they do not regard bullying as an issue for the school. Pupils appreciate the 'family feel' that staff provide and recognise that they are sensitive to any of their concerns. They know that staff will spend time to resolve problems, however large or small.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. There are clear systems to support staff and pupils. For example, staff receive training about safeguarding and radicalisation, which has heightened their understanding of the danger and risks posed to pupils. Leaders have ensured that all staff are highly trained to keep pupils safe.
- Careers education is not delivered to pupils in Year 8. As a result, pupils are not able to make informed choices about their next steps. Pupils in key stage 4 experience careers fairs and visits from local colleges and providers, and can access personal careers interviews. Form teachers provide support with how to complete application forms for pupils' next steps in education, employment or training.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good across all areas of the school. They are keen to learn and show respect for others. The majority of pupils show pride in their written work and their personal presentation, for example in their uniform.

- Pupils enjoy school and benefit from the small and positive learning environment. They form good relationships with staff and cooperate well in lessons. Pupils are proud of their school and value their education.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Pupils who join the school midway through their education engage positively with the school. For example, pupils' increased interest in learning goes hand in hand with improved attendance.
- Pupils are tolerant of others and respectful of those who may look and act differently from themselves. A comment by one pupil during a meeting with an inspector epitomised the views of many present: 'Everyone is equal here. We treat everyone with mutual respect.'

Outcomes for pupils

- Pupils in key stage 4 are entered for a wide variety of qualifications that are well matched to their needs and abilities. Leaders, however, do not analyse key stage 4 examination results by subject or by specific groups. Leaders were unable to provide inspectors with evidence of analysed pupils' outcomes.
- Pupils enter the school with very low attainment compared with that of pupils of similar age nationally. Some pupils arrive with considerable barriers to learning. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is matched well to pupils' needs and that education, health and care plans are effective. However, the good practice and recorded evidence from the SENCo is not widely shared across the school.
- Leaders ensure that they work closely with pupils in key stage 4 to inform them about a range of opportunities open to them at age 16. This approach has frequently ensured that pupils secure destinations at a wide variety of institutions. All pupils enter education, employment or training after leaving Year 11.
- The school uses the newly revamped library to encourage wider reading among pupils. There have been organised authors' visits and there is a wide variety of books to drive up a thirst for learning among pupils. Reading is tracked and rewarded in the school and badges are used to entice eager readers and encourage others to read widely and often.
- Information provided by the SENCo revealed pupils' developing and improving their reading skills due to effective support programmes. An inspector listened to some pupils read confidently and observed successful reading recovery programmes within the school.