

“Our 2023 phonics screening check (PSC) average across 23 schools was 87%. The PSC average for our pupil premium children was 84% compared to the national average of 67%.”

Jane Cooksley is headteacher at Briar Hill Primary School, which was named TES Primary School of the Year 2022 and is in the top 5% of the most disadvantaged schools in the country.

Ofsted recognise that ‘reading is given the highest priority’

Our work with Ruth Miskin Training (RMT) and the Read Write Inc. (RWI) programme helps us achieve our ambition that all children, regardless of background, learn to read. Recent Ofsted reports highlight that: leaders make reading a priority; phonics teaching is well planned and delivered from the start of Reception; and books match children’s reading levels. Reference is made to a ‘carefully planned programme’ for teaching reading, that ‘teachers are well trained and deliver the programme consistently’ and ‘leaders provide effective support for staff new to teaching the programme’.



In a recent inspection of a primary school in our network, it was noted that ‘teachers make regular checks on which sounds pupils have remembered. When pupils have forgotten sounds, leaders ensure that extra lessons help them to catch up’. This attention to detail and extra daily practice is an essential part of our commitment to every child.

Trust information

Jane Cooksley, Regional Director, trust-wide reading leader and headteacher

Number of schools: 23

Number rated Good or Outstanding: 22

Trust first started working with RMT: 2017

Pupil premium (PP)

% pupils who qualify across 23 schools: 30%
(national average is 22.5%)

Trust average PSC results 2023: 87%

Trust average PSC results 2022: 89%

Trust average PSC results 2019: 88%

Trust average PSC results for PP children 2023: 84%

87% PSC across trust

We are delighted with our PSC results for 2023. The RWI programme and support from RMT mean we have a clear, consistent strategy and a ‘no excuses’ culture. We prioritise high- quality teaching of reading and tutoring for the slowest progress children in our schools.

A team of 23 expert reading leaders

Termly reading leader training with our RMT trainer benefits our team. We share and discuss each school’s data in these meetings.

Evaluating children’s progress and setting actions, both as a team and for individual schools, means we have clear, trust-wide expectations and consistency. Our reading leaders develop into true reading experts.

Bite-size training via the portal

We have face-to-face training for new staff and find the portal training films and virtual classroom mean all staff continue to refresh their knowledge, practise in small chunks and keep up to date. Guaranteed high-quality training for all; it makes such a difference to staff confidence and knowledge.



Focus on fluency

Whilst we're pleased with our PSC results, we remain focused on continuing to develop children's fluency. We maintain fidelity to the programme as RWI supports all elements of teaching reading and writing. Children stay on the programme until they complete it, regardless of age, to gain practice and confidence. This includes children in Key Stage 2, in our junior schools and any new arrival child.



David Ross Education Trust

Broadening Horizons