

Ridgeway Farm C of E Academy

The Buffer, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 4GT

Inspection dates

14 to 15 May 2019

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal provides strong and effective leadership. She is ably supported by the deputy principal. They inspire other leaders and teachers to do their utmost to enable pupils to achieve their best.
- The school is popular and its ethos and values underpin all aspects of its work. The number of pupils on roll has increased considerably since the school opened in 2016. Parents and pupils are highly positive about the school.
- Leaders in the trust support the school well. They work effectively with school leaders to monitor the school's work. They help them to draw up well-focused improvement plans.
- The teaching of phonics, and outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 and 2, have improved over time.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievement. They plan interesting work, which motivates pupils to learn. As a result, pupils' attitudes are consistently positive.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. An increasing number of pupils are working at greater depth in their learning. However, pupils' achievement in writing is weaker.
- Pastoral support is strong because staff care deeply about pupils. As a result, they prioritise pupils' safety and well-being.
- Pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons is exemplary because they understand routines and know what adults expect of them.
- Teaching is good in the early years. Children are provided with exciting activities which encourage them to explore and become absorbed in their learning. Children in the early years consistently achieve in line with other children nationally.
- Leaders routinely intervene when pupils need to make stronger progress. They make good use of additional funding to provide targeted pastoral and academic support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Extra support is helping disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND to concentrate well on their learning. This is improving their progress. However, more time is needed for this to have an impact on their attainment, particularly in writing.
- Attendance for some disadvantaged pupils and some pupils with SEND is lower than for other pupils. This restricts how well they can benefit from all the school has to offer.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that extra academic and pastoral support for pupils who need to catch up, especially disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, improves their progress and attendance
 - continuing to improve the teaching of writing so that pupils consistently achieve their full potential and work at greater depth in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal is enthusiastic and dedicated to working in close partnership with staff to improve outcomes for pupils. She has successfully led the school since it opened, managing the changes in staffing and increasing numbers of pupils effectively. A parent commented, 'There have been lots of different staff, but the school has coped brilliantly and always kept parents well informed.'
- The principal and deputy principal work well together and are impressive role models for staff. They lead the school confidently and skilfully because they are dedicated to making sure that pupils are well looked after and achieve their best.
- Staff morale is high. Staff feel motivated and respected members of the school because leaders consider their well-being and provide them with valuable support. For example, leaders mentor and train newly qualified teachers so that they understand how to improve their teaching.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders have an accurate view of the school because they make frequent checks on how well pupils are achieving. Their accurate evaluations help them to identify strengths and weaknesses, and this supports them to create appropriately targeted improvement plans. For example, leaders recognise that some pupils do not make the progress that they expect of them, particularly in writing. Leaders recognise that they have not yet been able to resolve these issues fully and, therefore, tackling them remains a priority in the school development plan.
- The pupil premium is used effectively. Leaders use their precise evaluations of pupils' needs to provide a wide variety of well-targeted support for pupils who need to catch up. For example, leaders provide extra pastoral and teaching support. This is successfully improving pupils' readiness to learn and is improving their academic progress. However, progress is still variable for several disadvantaged pupils, particularly in writing. This is hindering them from achieving what might be expected for their age. Some pupils are further disadvantaged by having higher rates of absence.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has an accurate understanding of how well pupils are doing because she routinely checks the impact of teaching and supports teachers and teaching assistants to plan next steps in pupils' learning. This is helping pupils to make good progress from their starting points. However, this is not yet strong enough to enable pupils to undertake work similar to their peers. In addition, attendance of pupils with SEND is lower than that of other pupils, which restricts how well they are able to benefit from all that the school has to offer. Parents are pleased with the support the school provides for their children. A parent commented, 'The school is very inclusive and supportive of pupils with special educational needs.'
- The sport premium is used effectively because the school has carefully evaluated the needs of staff and pupils. The school has purchased appropriate resources and provided training for staff. This is improving pupils' participation in sport and teachers' confidence in teaching. Pupils relish the opportunity to try new sports, such as 'tchoukball', and avidly participate in the daily 'Golden Mile'. Pupils believe that the

school looks after their physical, emotional and mental health well.

- Leaders and staff work well together to develop the curriculum. This provides rich and stimulating experiences which spark pupils' interests. A parent commented that the curriculum design was 'inspirational'. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of clubs, visits and residential trips. These enrich pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders are further developing the curriculum in order to strengthen pupils' progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.
- Trust and school leaders provide staff with appropriate training to improve outcomes for pupils. For example, the school improvement officer supports leaders and teachers to evaluate their work so that they understand how to improve teaching. Staff in the school work effectively with leaders in the school's partner school, Lydiard Millicent CE Primary. This enables them to share good practice in order to strengthen the quality of teaching and leadership. For example, more pupils are now working at greater depth in their learning in reading and mathematics than previously.
- The school's vision of 'Believe, Learn, Grow' and its values, such as friendship, are promoted in the daily life of the school. For example, pupils are encouraged to have high aspirations and to be kind to others. Pupils confirm that, 'This makes the school a better place.'
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They typically comment, 'What a lovely school... the standard of teaching, discipline and leadership is excellent... I only have praise for the school.'

Governance of the school

- Trustees and governors provide appropriate support and challenge to the school. The trust holds governors to account for evaluating the school's effectiveness. As a result, governors work in close partnership with the school to check the impact of their work.
- Trustees and governors ask pertinent questions to improve their understanding of the actions leaders are taking. They carry out a range of activities to help them to evaluate the school's effectiveness. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school prioritises pupils' pastoral needs and works closely with families to support the well-being and safety of pupils. Pupils say they feel safe at school. Parents agree.
- Leaders refer concerns in a timely manner. They make effective links with external agencies to help pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders keep detailed records and frequently check that their actions are having a positive impact. They adapt the support they offer, when necessary.
- All relevant checks are made to ensure that adults are safe to work with children. The details are thoroughly recorded on the school's single central record.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training and understand the need to be vigilant.

They can explain precisely what to do if they have concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Most teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan work which is well pitched to meet pupils' abilities. Teachers explain tasks carefully so that pupils understand what to do. They intervene at appropriate points to check pupils' understanding. This enables them to correct any errors and modify learning so that they move pupils' learning on.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning well. Often, they use probing questions, such as 'What do you think?' and 'How do you know?' to encourage pupils to think hard and justify their answers. Teachers regularly provide challenges to extend pupils' learning. Accurate assessment enables teachers to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Teachers provide written feedback, in line with the school's marking policy. Pupils are regularly given opportunities to review and correct their learning in order to improve it.
- Phonics is taught well, and this enables most pupils to secure their knowledge of phonics rapidly in order to read accurately. Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading, and they regularly practise reading to develop their fluency. Teaching is well planned to enable pupils to develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills.
- Mathematics teaching is effective. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to revise mathematical concepts they have learned and they practise their skills to consolidate them. This is improving pupils' recall and fluency in mathematics. Pupils are learning to apply their mathematics knowledge and skills in different contexts. This enables them to reason, solve problems and justify their answers. For example, a Year 5 pupil was able to explain how he knew that the square root of 54 was closer to 7 than 8.
- Teachers consistently provide opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes in a range of subjects. Pupils are improving the consistency with which they apply their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills to improve the quality of their written work. Pupils' work confirms they have more stamina for writing and are improving the complexity of their writing. Pupils are making good progress in writing, but this is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. More time is needed for leaders' actions to improve writing in order to have a sustained impact on pupils' achievement.
- The interesting curriculum enables pupils to develop their reading and writing skills in different subjects, such as history and geography. For example, pupils in the mixed class of Year 4 and 5 pupils listened in awe as the teacher explained that the local police had asked them to carry out an investigation. There was a buzz of excitement as they took their clipboards outside and considered whether artefacts, such as spear heads, came from the Stone Age. Questions such as 'Why is this here?' and 'How do you think it got here?' prompted pupils to apply their knowledge about the Stone Age to explain their thinking.
- Additional adults are well deployed. Suitably focused interventions are helping pupils who need to catch up, particularly pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Sometimes this is due to pupils' complex needs or because they have only recently come to the school. Where necessary, pupils are provided with emotional support to help them tackle their work more positively. Other pupils are provided with extra teaching support. This is having a demonstrable impact on improving pupils' confidence

and self-esteem. Pupils' academic progress is improving, but is still variable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel valued and respected because adults develop positive and caring relationships with them. They are confident that there is someone to go to if they need to share their worries.
- Parents comment favourably on how well the school looks after their children and supports their welfare. A parent stated, 'The school looks after children well and my child is thriving.'
- Pupils are enthusiastic and confident learners who enjoy coming to school. They enjoy chatting to visitors and talking about their learning.
- Leaders have a good understanding of pupils' social and emotional needs and, as a result, they provide precisely focused pastoral support. For example, they provide safe spaces to help pupils to manage their behaviour. One pupil commented, 'I go to the sensory room when I need to calm down and this stops me from getting angry.' Highly effective pastoral support is making a positive difference to pupils' resilience and engagement in their learning. In turn, this is improving their academic success.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying and are confident that it does not happen in the school. They believe that, if it did, adults would quickly sort it out. Pupils know how to stay safe online.
- The school's values, ethos and teaching help pupils to be well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils are taught about different faiths and cultures and learn about the significance of religious festivals. For example, pupils in Year 1 learn about the Jewish festival of Shabbat and make comparisons with Christian festivals.
- Pupils are taught to think of others less fortunate than themselves, and they participate in fundraising events, such as Race for Life and Sport Relief.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' engagement in their learning and behaviour. As a result, pupils move sensibly and calmly around the school. They listen carefully in lessons and settle to work with minimal delay.
- The overwhelming majority of parents, staff and pupils confirm that behaviour is well managed. Pupils comment that when behaviour falls short of the school's expectations, adults quickly resolve it.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and persevere with their learning because adults are encouraging and supportive.
- Pupils enjoy receiving rewards, such as the 'golden lanyard' for good behaviour and

achievement. This motivates them to try their best.

- The school has had to impose some short-term exclusions for a small minority of pupils with complex behavioural needs. This has been crucial for the safety of these pupils and others in the school. Leaders have worked closely with parents and have identified specific strategies to help pupils to defuse conflicts. This is having a positive impact.
- The school works effectively with parents to promote and celebrate good attendance. As a result, most pupils attend regularly. However, a minority of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND have higher absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes in all subjects, particularly reading and mathematics, have improved since the school opened in September 2016.
- At the end of 2017, too few pupils achieved well at the end of key stages 1 and 2. However, in 2018, standards improved considerably. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was in line with pupils nationally. There was also a notable increase in the proportion of pupils achieving well in all subjects at key stage 1.
- In 2018, pupils' outcomes at key stage 2 improved in all subjects. The proportion of pupils who attained standards typical for their age was close to that of pupils nationally. However, few pupils achieved higher standards and progress in writing was weaker than in other subjects.
- The school's latest assessment information and pupils' books confirm that pupils currently in the school are making good progress in all subjects. However, pupils make stronger progress in reading and mathematics. Opportunities that teachers provide to develop pupils' writing are improving their achievement, but this has not yet been sustained over time.
- Current teaching of phonics is good and this ensures that pupils get off to a good start in reading. Most pupils are able to use their secure knowledge of phonics to read accurately and fluently.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about their books. Pupils read regularly and this develops their comprehension skills and improves their vocabulary. The welcoming and well-resourced library inspires pupils to choose books that interest them.
- Most pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school is developing the curriculum, which is improving the progress pupils make in other subjects. For example, pupils who find academic work difficult are well supported to realise their potential in sport. This motivates pupils to participate and try their best in all subjects.
- Extra pastoral and academic support is helping pupils who need to catch up. For example, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are improving their ability to concentrate on their learning and are making good progress. However, most pupils with SEND, and up to a half of disadvantaged pupils, are unable to undertake work typical for their age. It will take more time for the extra help they receive to have a

sustained impact on their attainment, particularly in writing.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is a vibrant and welcoming learning environment. Adults establish positive and caring relationships with children. They regularly praise children for their achievements, which encourages them to do their best. Adults consistently ensure that children are safe.
- Early years leadership and teaching is good. Teachers use accurate assessment to plan children's learning. Leaders frequently check how well children are doing and this enables them to plan for their next steps. As a result, children consistently achieve a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years leader supports the teaching of reading and writing beyond the early years. This ensures that pupils across the school are well supported to build on the strong foundations they achieve in the early years.
- Children currently in the early years are achieving well in all areas of learning. The early years leader has identified the need to provide further challenge so that more children exceed what is typical for their age.
- Children know the school routines well and cooperate happily and sociably with others. They learn to negotiate and take turns, for example when using bikes and scooters.
- Teachers plan a rich curriculum and provide stimulating activities in and out of the classroom. This helps to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of areas of learning. Children enjoy exploring and are able to sustain their interest for long periods of time because they find learning fun. For example, children work out how to construct a chair using foam bricks and they hunt for bugs in the mud.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is targeted appropriately to ensure that children make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are well deployed and this enables them to provide focused support to match children's abilities. Adults explain and model tasks clearly and ask effective questions to assess children's understanding. Adults encourage children to use their knowledge of phonics to sound out words in order to spell them. This is helping children to develop their writing.
- Adults in the early years work in close partnership with parents, and this ensures that parents know how to support their children.

School details

Unique reference number	142321
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10088269

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Cain
Principal	Carly Luce
Telephone number	01793 677 471
Website	www.ridgewayfarmcea.org
Email address	admin@ridgewayfarmcea.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ridgeway Farm Church of England Academy opened in September 2016. The school is smaller than the average primary school. In the last two years, the number of pupils on roll has almost doubled.
- The principal of the school is also principal of Lydiard Millicent CE Primary. Both schools are part of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust. The school's work is overseen by a governing body, which is accountable to a board of trustees and the chief executive officer.
- Most pupils are White British. Few are from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs or have an educational health and care plan is below that of pupils nationally.

- The school runs a breakfast- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all classes and carried out a scrutiny of pupils' English, mathematics and topic books. All observations and reviews of pupils' books were carried out jointly with the principal or deputy principal.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's development plan and self-evaluation. Meetings were held with senior leaders to discuss the school's latest assessment information. Inspectors reviewed and discussed governors' minutes, behaviour logs, attendance information and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors held several informal discussions with pupils during lessons, breaktime and lunchtime. One of the inspectors held a meeting with a group of pupils to seek their views of the school. An inspector heard some pupils from Year 1 and Year 3 read.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer, school improvement officer and the chair of the standards committee for the trust. A separate meeting was held with a representative of the governing body.
- Inspectors held several meetings with senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, the mathematics leader and the early years leader, who is also the English leader.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour on arrival to school, in the breakfast-club and after-school club, during lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with parents during the inspection to gauge their views of the school. They also considered 40 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and 14 free-text comments. Inspectors took account of 58 responses to the online pupils' questionnaire and 14 responses to the online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Catherine Beeks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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