

Inspection of a good school: Ramsey Junior School

Station Road, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE26 1JA

Inspection dates:

8–9 January 2020

Outcome

Ramsey Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to this friendly and welcoming school, feel safe and enjoy their lessons. They wear their uniforms with pride. They say that staff really care about them, have high expectations and that learning is fun. Pupils work hard in lessons to achieve their best and are proud of their efforts. They appreciate the rewards they receive when they do well. Pupils show respect to visitors. They explain enthusiastically about the new things they learn about in class and how friendly the school is.

Behaviour in and out of class is good because expectations are high. Pupils know what is expected of them. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school. Pupils enjoy their breaktimes. Play pals have been trained to make sure that no one is left out. They ensure that everyone has someone to play with and help them to play games with each other successfully. Pupils like the extra-curricular activities provided for them.

Pupils are not worried about bullying because they say it does not happen often. They know that they should tell a member of staff if someone bullies them. Pupils are assured that staff can sort things out swiftly, if necessary.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of what pupils should learn. Subject leaders have sequenced the content in each subject of the curriculum in a logical way. Knowledge is revisited regularly in every subject and pupils learn and remember new things well. Staff carefully consider pupils' needs and interests when planning learning. They check what pupils already know and remember. In geography, teachers are still adapting their approach. The number of pupils achieving a deep understanding of reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is not as high as it could be.

Pupils' attitudes to learning is excellent. Pupils demonstrate high standards of behaviour. Disruptive behaviour is rare. Teachers share clear expectations of what good behaviour

should look like. Pupils are polite to adults and their peers. Those who need help to manage their behaviour are well supported.

Pupils' enjoyment of reading is a strength of the school. Pupils take every opportunity to immerse themselves in their favourite books. World Book Day is popular, with pupils eager to dress up and act like their favourite character. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the enchanting reading displays. Pupils' interest was captivated by 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' display, which had a life-sized wardrobe. There is a well-stocked library and authors are regularly invited to talk about their books. Teachers match books carefully to pupils' needs. Reading sessions develop fluency and comprehension. Most pupils are confident readers.

Adults meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Leaders have designed a purposeful curriculum for the pupils. The rainbow room is a stimulating environment which pupils use to support their learning. Well-trained higher-level teaching assistants motivate individuals and small groups to overcome whatever challenges they face. Adults use and review pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans effectively. This helps pupils achieve their best.

The curriculum is enhanced by trips, such as Grafham Water, where pupils develop map reading skills. 'What's in the news' assemblies and weekly celebration assemblies acknowledge 'pupils of the week' and their out-of-school achievements. Pupils have the opportunity to be part of the school council, and participate in inter-school and intra-school competitions.

The headteacher is ambitious and her high expectations are shared by staff, governors and the trust. They know which aspects they need to improve. Staff work together well as a team, and are passionate about their work. Leaders are considerate of teachers' workload and try to think of ways to reduce it. Parents and carers are supportive of the staff's work.

The local governing body is currently undergoing a change, to enhance the way it contributes to school improvements. There is more work to do before it fulfils its new responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders place safeguarding as the highest priority. Leaders carry out all necessary checks when recruiting new staff. There is a strong safeguarding culture. Regular training ensures that staff know what to do if they have concerns. The knowledge staff have of each pupil helps them be aware of any support needed. Leaders record concerns and work closely with other organisations when it is relevant to do so. Staff teach pupils how to assess risks, including when online. Pupils report that they feel safe. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The proportions of pupils who achieve and exceed the expected standards in reading and mathematics are not as high as they could be. Leaders need to make sure that pupils achieve highly in these subjects by the end of Year 6.
- Some curriculum plans have not had time to be fully implemented and embedded. It is clear from the actions that leaders have taken to train staff in how to deliver them that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders should make sure that curriculum plans for all subjects are well implemented and embedded across the school.
- The local governing body is reconstituting as a community council. This new approach needs embedding, to ensure that the trust holds leaders to account robustly.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Ramsey Community Junior School, to be good on 24–25 September 2014.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 143777 |
| Local authority | Cambridgeshire |
| Inspection number | 10121417 |
| Type of school | Junior deemed primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 245 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair | Caroline Whalley |
| Principal | Patsy Peres (executive principal) |
| Website | www.ramspinfederation.co.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Ramsey Junior School is a smaller-than-average-sized junior school.
- Ramsey Junior School converted to an academy in April 2017. The predecessor school was rated good in September 2014.
- The school is part of the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust and is governed by the board of trustees. A local governing body is in place to hold leaders to account and this governing body reports to the board of trustees. The local governing body is being supported to reconstitute as a community council with representation from pupils, parents, staff and the wider community. The intention is to provide local knowledge, understanding and expertise around ethos, vision and curriculum on behalf of the community that the school serves.
- The executive principal is also the headteacher of Ramsey Spinning Infant School.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the executive principal, senior leaders, a range of curriculum leaders, teachers, support staff, representatives from the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust, the chair of governors and pupils.

- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. I spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, undertook work scrutinies, and met with teachers and pupils to understand the quality of education.
- I evaluated a range of documentation, including the school's summary of its own strengths and weaknesses. I looked at school policies and procedures, and statutory information on the school's website.
- To inspect the school's safeguarding arrangements, I spoke to the designated safeguarding lead, members of staff, parents, pupils and the governing body. I viewed the safeguarding audit completed by the trust. I checked the single central record and a sample of safeguarding records. I checked the training relating to safeguarding.
- I considered pupils' behaviour and welfare at different times of the school day. I observed playtime and lunchtime. I spoke to pupils about their school.
- I took account of 89 responses to Ofsted Parent View and spoke to parents before school. I considered the comments made in 83 free-text responses. I reviewed the 24 responses to an inspection questionnaire returned by staff and 27 responses from the online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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