

Inspection of a good school: Ramsey Spinning Infant School

High Street, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE26 1AD

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

Outcome

Ramsey Spinning Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are extremely happy at Ramsey Spinning Infant School. They arrive with smiling faces each day, and there is a delightful atmosphere in lessons. Pupils work hard and are determined to do their best. They are very courteous towards visitors.

Poor behaviour is not tolerated. Leaders and pupils are determined that it will not be a barrier to learning. Clear behaviour management strategies are followed closely by staff. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is impeccable, both in and out of class. Pupils feel safe. There is very little bullying or falling out. Should it happen, it is dealt with quickly.

The school gives pupils plentiful opportunities to learn about the world beyond Ramsey. Pupils visit a local mosque and they learn Chinese dances as part of their New Year celebrations. Pupils talk knowledgeably about their fundraising for the David School in Sierra Leone.

Pupils are kind and caring towards each other. They enjoy talking about their work and their successes. They are especially positive about the 'headteacher's tea party', which staff use to reward good work and good behaviour.

Pupils willingly take responsibility. They contribute to school improvement through the 'Spinning parliament'. This is currently working on establishing 'friendship teams' to help at playtime or lunchtime.

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

Leaders and staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils flourish, both socially and academically. There is a strong focus on pupils' personal development. This is evident in all aspects of the school's work. Core values, such as tolerance and respect, are modelled by staff in their interactions with each other and with pupils. Pupils are well prepared for their transfer to the junior school.

Leaders check provision carefully. This means that they know what they still need to improve.

Staff have worked hard together to plan a curriculum that helps pupils to learn new skills quickly. Teachers know what they should teach and when. If need be, they revisit topics to reinforce prior learning before moving on to a new activity. Consequently, pupils have good recall of their previous work. In science, for example, they understand the importance of healthy eating and use scientific terms such as 'transparent', 'translucent' and 'opaque' accurately. As a result, most pupils achieve well. However, the curriculum and activities in lessons are not always adapted well enough to challenge the most able pupils to achieve their best.

The headteacher and staff give the teaching of reading the highest priority. Phonics is taught well across the school. Pupils quickly develop a love of reading. There is good-quality support to help pupils who are in danger of falling behind. Pupils read regularly to adults, and books are generally well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge. There are, however, occasions when some pupils try to read books that are too difficult for them.

Children are supported well in Reception. Staff ensure that children have plentiful opportunities to improve their early number and reading skills. What they should learn, when, is mapped out clearly so that the right thing is taught at the right time. Adults plan activities that are fun and engaging. They intervene in a timely manner to move learning on when children are ready.

Skilled teaching assistants give effective support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Provision for these pupils is planned well and takes good account of their particular needs. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from similarly tailored support.

Leaders ensure that the workload of staff is manageable. Staff appreciate the chances they get to develop their teaching expertise. They especially value opportunities to visit other schools within the multi-academy trust.

The academy trust provides effective strategic oversight of school leaders' work. Their understanding of local issues is not as strong because the local governing body is small in size and has limited representation from the local community. The trust is reconstituting the local governing body as a community council to address this.

Parents and carers are very happy with the school and support it well. They make complimentary comments, such as 'My children are very happy and flourishing here, and I feel that their unique backgrounds are respected' and 'I couldn't have wished for a better start to my child's education.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school places pupils' care and welfare at the heart of all it does.

The academy trust ensures that statutory guidance is followed. The school provides regular safeguarding training for staff. This takes account of national guidance. Staff understand the importance of being vigilant about potential concerns. They respond appropriately should any arise.

The curriculum helps pupils to learn the importance of staying safe. Pupils talk confidently about stranger-danger and the need to 'stop, look and listen' when they cross the road. They have a good understanding of e-safety and they know to 'remember to surf safely'.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not always adapted well enough for the most able pupils. Some activities are not challenging enough. As a result, few pupils reach greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders now need to ensure that lessons are always adapted well, and pupils are given sufficiently challenging work so that a greater proportion reach the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- The multi-academy trust's central leadership team does not have secure enough systems for finding out about the school's context. This limits their ability to tailor their support and challenge to the school, so that it takes full account of the changing needs of the local community. The trust's leaders should ensure that local circumstances are properly understood so that support and challenge can be better adapted to suit the school.
- Less-able pupils sometimes have reading books that do not match the sounds they know. They find these books too hard to read fluently, and this slows the progress they make. The school needs to improve the way reading books are organised, so that there is a sharper match of books to pupils' phonics skills.

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 Spinning Infant School, to be good on 13–14 November 2013.

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

Unique reference number	143775
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10121416
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Caroline Whalley
Headteacher	Patsy Peres
Website	www.ramspinfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- Ramsey Spinning Infant School is smaller than an average-sized infant school. There are seven classes. Children in the early years are taught in three single-age Reception classes.
- The school converted to become an academy in April 2017. When its predecessor school, also called Ramsey Spinning Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust and is governed by the board of trustees. The school has a local governing body. This is currently being reconstituted as a community council, with representation from pupils, parents, staff and the wider community.
- The executive headteacher is also the headteacher of Ramsey Junior School.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders and other staff. I also met with representatives from the Elliot Foundation Academy Trust and the local governing body.

- I spoke to several groups of pupils to gather their views of school. I also heard pupils reading to members of staff.
- I considered the school's approaches to safeguarding by talking to staff and pupils and reviewing documentation. Other school documents I scrutinised included planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- I looked at the 70 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including written comments. I also considered the 23 responses to the staff survey and nine responses to the pupil survey.
- I did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and science. I observed lessons in these subjects, with the headteacher. I also held meetings with teachers, curriculum leaders and pupils. I looked at a range of pupils' work in these subjects.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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