

Inspection of a good school: Ripple Primary School

Suffolk Road, Barking, Essex IG11 7QS

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

Outcome

Ripple Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this large, welcoming school. They are motivated to learn and keen to succeed. Leaders have created a strong sense of community across the two sites. Pupils of many cultures and backgrounds play and learn happily here. They feel safe because staff look after them and care about what they say.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Teachers and other staff work hard to make learning fun and memorable. In most lessons, they encourage pupils to think deeply about their learning. This helps pupils to achieve well.

Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and at playtimes. They understand that it is important to treat others as they would want to be treated. Pupils understand what bullying is, including the different sorts of bullying that can happen. They said that there is hardly any bullying. If it does occur, they know that an adult will deal with it quickly.

Leaders provide a variety of opportunities to help pupils appreciate the wider world. Pupils join in with lots of activities outside lesson times. These activities mean that pupils can explore a wide range of interests. Pupils also enjoy taking part in community events.

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

Leaders and governors have thought carefully about the knowledge they want pupils to learn. They have planned pupils' learning in each subject meticulously. Leaders' plans are ambitious and include rich experiences designed to deepen pupils' understanding.

Plans are working well in most subjects. Pupils build effectively on knowledge and skills that they developed in earlier years. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson, pupils decorated their clay tiles by imprinting patterns they had learned in Year 1. In some subjects, such as geography, teachers are at the early stages of using leaders' plans. Sometimes, teachers are unsure about how to adapt planning and develop pupils' knowledge

progressively. Some subject leaders are new to post and lack the expertise to provide colleagues with high-quality guidance. Senior leaders are supporting them to develop their leadership skills.

Ensuring that pupils learn to read well is given a high priority. Leadership of reading is strong. In the past, some pupils did not achieve as well as they should. Leaders have secured clear improvements. Pupils learn to read well here. Phonics is planned and taught effectively. As soon as children start school, staff help them to learn the sounds that letters represent. Staff make sure that children have plenty of practice in using their phonics knowledge to read new words. They also teach new sounds in a logical sequence. This helps children to become confident readers. In the Reception and key stage 1 classes, staff provide effective support to pupils who struggle to develop their early reading skills. Across the school, teachers ensure that pupils read regularly. Sometimes, however, pupils do not read books that match their phonics knowledge. This prevents them from developing their reading fluency. Staff make sure that pupils in Years 3 to 6 read a demanding range of books and authors. Teaching enables pupils to develop strong comprehension skills.

In mathematics, teachers use subject plans effectively. They are clear about when they should teach pupils new content. Staff make sure that pupils have the necessary knowledge to approach new concepts confidently. Pupils benefit from lots of opportunities to solve problems and apply their knowledge. In early years, children get a strong grounding in important mathematical ideas. For instance, children enjoyed counting and measuring in the 'Goldilocks' role-play area.

The headteacher leads a team whose members are highly committed to the school. Teachers work well together to develop each other's skills and share their expertise. Teachers inspire pupils to learn by making lessons interesting and fun. Staff are proud to work here. They value how leaders support their well-being and workload.

Outings and external visitors extend pupils' learning beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils learn about other cultures and religions. They understand and respect difference, and why it is important to treat everyone fairly.

Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of right and wrong. This is clear in their considerate behaviour. Pupils and teachers focus on learning without any disruption. In early years, children concentrate on their work and do it well. Children learn to do things for themselves. This sets them up well for Year 1.

Leaders and staff support vulnerable pupils very well. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers work closely with other adults to meet pupils' individual needs. Leaders check that extra support helps pupils with SEND to learn effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding here. Leaders have ensured that all staff know how to keep pupils safe. Regular training ensures that staff are fully aware of the different risks that pupils may face. Effective systems are in place to record any concerns about pupils' well-being. Leaders act quickly on any concerns. Information about vulnerable pupils is shared appropriately with relevant staff. Leaders work closely with outside agencies, when necessary, to support pupils and their families. Leaders also ensure that appropriate checks are made on the suitability of adults who work with pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have improved plans for each subject so that pupils can know more and remember more. They have decided what content is important and made sure that pupils study this content in a logical sequence. However, in subjects such as geography, teachers are unclear about exactly what they need to teach and when. Leaders should develop teachers' expertise in using and adapting subject planning. They should also check how well pupils learn and remember the knowledge set out in subject planning.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They are keen to make a positive difference to the quality of pupils' learning. Leaders should support new subject leaders to develop their leadership skills and ensure that they provide teachers with effective guidance and support.
- Pupils take home books that are sometimes too difficult for them to practise their reading skills. As a result, some pupils are not able to read all the words in the books accurately. Leaders need to ensure that pupils take home books that are well matched to their abilities.

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 school to be good in May 2016.

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	101198
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10121568
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	978
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Toby Kinder
Headteacher	Roger Mitchell
Website	www.rippleprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18–19 May 2016

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school and is split across two sites.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school provides an additional provision for up to 16 pupils from other schools. Pupils who attend this provision receive specialist support to manage their behaviour.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, other senior leaders and staff. We spoke to the school improvement adviser from the local authority. We also met with the chair and vice-chair of governors.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. In these subjects, we spoke to leaders, visited lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils. We also looked at samples of pupils' work.
- We talked to parents and carers, staff and governors about safeguarding arrangements and routines at the school. We examined the record of pre-employment checks on

school staff and checked safeguarding records, including how leaders respond to any concerns about pupils' welfare.

- We met with groups of pupils to talk about their work and their experiences of school. We spoke to pupils in lessons and during breaktimes.
- We visited classes in Nursery, Reception, key stage 1 and key stage 2. We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes.

Inspection team

Chris Birtles, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Ofsted Inspector

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